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Angela Rippon

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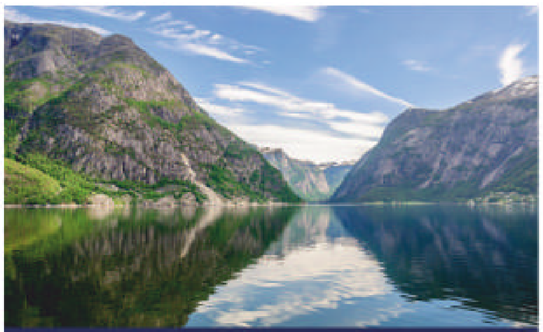

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ABTA
Travel with confidence

This month...

Kindness OF OTHERS

There's a lot of kindness in the community where I live. I have neighbours who leave little pots of marmalade, freshly baked scones or bags of brownies on my doorstep. 'I was making them anyway and thought you might like some,' is often the only simple explanation that accompanies such lovely gifts. My dear friend Louise made me a beautiful striped scarf on her knitting machine and another left a gorgeous box of home-grown vegetables simply because I'd dropped a copy of *Prima* through her door. This week, that kindness went to new levels when my friend Anne and her neighbour Mike came to the rescue after I found an injured deer while out walking. Anne and Mike not only trudged down muddy paths and across a field to find the animal, they called the police on the non-emergency line 101 to ask what we should do. Sadly, the deer didn't pull through, but it wasn't for want of Anne and Mike's help and I'd like to say 'thank you' to Sussex police, too, and to the kind officer who came to check on the deer anyway. And, while it's undoubtedly a sad story to share with you, it's also a reminder of how kind and caring people can be. Community is such an important part of *Prima* and I'd love to hear your stories of when your neighbours or those in your area have stepped in with support, kindness or even just a smiling face. Do email me (address below right) for your own special shout out to the people who make life that bit brighter.

Jo

JO CHECKLEY
EDITOR
jo.checkley@hearst.co.uk

All new!

I hate having my photo done. But with the support of lovely photographer Liz McAulay, brilliant stylist Helen Johnson, a very top hair and makeup team and our *Prima* picture editor Jo Lockwood all offering much-needed encouragement, I finally got some new pictures of me.

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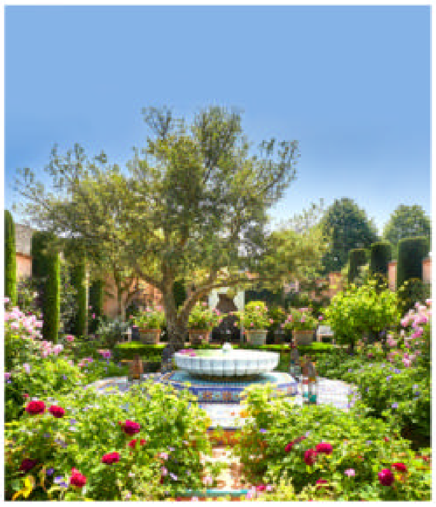
Meet three readers who gave their look an amazing reboot

A PUZZLE A DAY... I'm thrilled to bring you our new online puzzles site at prima.co.uk/puzzles. Once you register, you'll have unlimited access to a whole host of daily puzzles from Wordsearches to Sudokus, Crosswords, Codewords and Kriss Krosses. And it's all for FREE!



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Garden breaks to love – and inspire you

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We asked for your glam-gran pics and you didn't disappoint!

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Try our bird-spotting guide, plus tips on how to make your garden welcoming

COVER STAR

TRUE CLASS

It was a real pleasure to meet Angela Rippon at our cover shoot. She's such a professional but also great fun, happily chatting to us about that Morecambe and Wise moment – who can forget her dancing with those comedy legends? She also wowed in front of our camera as you'll see in our incredible photos on page 8. Fabulous!

Photography Liz McAulay, Nicky Johnston, Robert Smith Photography, National Trust Books

Don't miss the MAY ISSUE issue OUT 29 MARCH

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prima
GET SET for spring!
Angela Rippon
Treats for Easter

Meet cover star Angela Rippon on page 8

Photography Nicky Johnston **Styling** Natalie Read **Hair & makeup** Liz Kitchiner **Angela wears** Blazer dress, Karen Millen. Jewellery, Angela's own

prima LOVES

ALL £25 & UNDER

Celebrate Easter with one of these pretty and affordable treats

HANDCRAFTED TREAT

A delicious Dorset honey and 47% Colombian chocolate combo.
Milk Chocolate Honeycombe Egg, £14, Chococo

DOUBLE BUBBLE

On-trend and bloom-ready.
Bubble vase, £16, Habitat

PURPLE REIGN

A subtle sparkle.
Urban Decay 24/7 Eyeshadow Mono in Freebird, £18

NAIL IT

Sunshine on your fingertips.
OPI Nail Lacquer in One Chic Chick, £13.90

LIP SERVICE

The key to softer lips.
Lanolips Lemonaid Lip Treatment, £8.99

ON THE GO

Organise your loyalty cards.
Card purse, £22, Estella Bartlett

CHECK MATE

Burn your favourite spring scent.
Oil burner, £5, George Home

POT LUCK

Give your plant a happy home.
Bobble Planter, £18, Sass & Belle

SIT SOFT

Add a frilling new touch to your home.
Cushion cover, £16.99, Kave Home

HONEY HONEY

A cushion with a joyful message.
Cushion, £14, Matalan

ATTENTION!

Chocolate ganache and hazelnut praline – yum!
Egg & Soldiers, £11, Hotel Chocolat

BYOMA
CREAMY JELLY CLEANSER
BYOMA
MOISTURIZING RICH CREAM

SPRING CLEAN

Fresh skin starts here. Byoma Creamy Jelly Cleanser, £9.99; Moisturizing Rich Cream, £13.99

HOT CROSS BUNS & EASTER EGG HUNTS

PLATE UP

It's bun time! Emma Bridgewater Easter Egg plate, £20, Daisy Park

BASKET CASE

Store bathroom bits in style. Basket, £7, Primark

MELLOW YELLOW

Turn up the sun in your decor. Bud vase, £7.95, The Northern Line

DAISY CHAIN

Prettify your table. Side plate, £12, Marks & Spencer

Cadbury
Mini eggs

FOR CHOCOHOLICS

Everyone's favourite eggs in bar form. So addictive. Cadbury Mini Eggs Bar, £3.50, Tesco

IN THE BAG

The ideal carry-all. Shopper, £9.50, Oliver Bonas

RELAXED CHIC

Daytime sequins are key for spring. T-shirt, £14, 10-28, Bonmarché

Caramayo
Egg Sandwich

SO FUN

A genius Easter twist. Caramayo Chocolate Easter Sandwich, £11, Hotel Chocolat

FRESH LOOK

Perfect with white denim. Blazer, £25, 8-22, Tu Clothing

IT'S A CINCH

A pastel belt adds a hint of colour. Belt, £25, one size, Oliver Bonas

Compiled by Jo Atkinson, Becca Green, Alice Shields, Becky Topping, Georgie D'Arcy Coles

'Yes, I can still do a HIGH KICK'

Angela Rippon CBE talks to Charlotte Oliver about the men in her life, *that* Morecambe and Wise moment and why she's still breaking barriers at 78

Angela Rippon divides her time between west London and Devon. Having made history in 1975 as the first female journalist to regularly read the national news on the BBC, she has gone on to become one of Britain's best-loved broadcasters. She now co-presents BBC One's *Rip Off Britain* and also appears on GB News.

DON'T STOP ME NOW

I never thought I'd still be working at 78. When I was in my 50s, John Birt, the then director-general of the BBC, said, 'Angela, you've had your day; it's time to make room for the young women coming behind you.' Well, that was 28 years ago – and I'm still here! Young women are indeed coming up behind me, and I love it. I'm thrilled to see so many female broadcasters now reading the news, filming it, producing and editing it.

I take it as a huge compliment that TV channels still have the trust in me to do a good job. For GB News to say, 'Will you come and sit in for Alastair Stewart and do four hours of pure news, current affairs and politics?' is wonderful. Likewise, I'm very proud that Glo [Gloria Hunniford], Julia [Somerville] and I are still presenting *Rip Off Britain* nearly 15 years later. We're three women of a certain age – I'm 78, Glo is 82 and Julia is 75 – making important television, and its legacy is embodied in all the people who come up to us and say, 'I've learned so much from you.

> ‘The way I see it, you only have one go at life, so get as much out of it as you can, whatever you do’

Opposite page: Angela wears Shirt, The Shirt Company. Trousers, Max & Co at Fenwick
This page: Angela wears Dress, Gina Bacconi. Shoes, Carvela

With Ernie Wise on the 1976 Christmas special

Angela presenting the news in 1976

You've saved me so much money.' That, for me, is public broadcasting at its best.

Of course, there's going to be a day when the phone stops ringing. In fact, my accountant jokes that I've been telling him, 'I might have to retire next year,' for as long as he can remember – but it hasn't happened yet. What is wonderful is that so many people are now able to work well into their 70s and 80s, if they choose to. If they couldn't, it would be a terrible waste of their talent, knowledge and experience.

Personally, I don't think about ageing now. I've met people at 92 who still have the enthusiasm for life of a 30-year-old – and I've met 30-year-olds who, frankly, have one foot in the grave! The way I see it, you only have one go at life, so get as much out of it as you can, whatever you do.

WHERE IT ALL BEGAN

Believe it or not, dance was my first love. I had knock-knees when I was young, so my parents sent me to ballet, and I continued going until the age of 17 – by which time I was 5ft 6in and too tall to be a ballerina. So I knuckled down and focused on academia instead.

I got my work ethic from my mum and my sense of curiosity and adventure from my dad. Mum loved working and did so her whole life; she was a tailor, drove lorries during the war for the Auxiliary Territorial Service (ATS) and later became a manager at Wedgwood bone china company. Meanwhile, Dad and I spent a lot of time in nature. He loved wildlife and taught me how to identify leaves on trees, plants and birds. To this day, I can look at a bird and tell you what type it is.

My teachers wanted me to go to university to become a teacher, but I dreamed of being a photojournalist. By chance, I saw an advert for a position working in the local newspaper's photography department. I thought, 'Ooh, I'd rather do that,' applied and got the job. I ended up writing stories and taking the photos to accompany them. Then, after three years, I got a call from the news editor at BBC South West asking me to audition as a news reporter, and I thought, 'What's there to lose?'

BREAKING NEWS

I still remember my first news segment; the BBC paid me six pounds and 10 shillings for the live broadcast, then four guineas for the radio repeat. I was terribly nervous. I knew how to write and take pictures, but no one had ever taught me how to read the news live. When I got home, my dad said, 'You looked like a rabbit caught in headlights. Next time, don't think about the thousands of people watching. Just talk to me.' Still today, I think, 'If my dad were sitting at home watching this, how would I explain the story to him?'

I ended up reading the national news by chance. From BBC South West, I'd moved to become a reporter for BBC One and BBC Two, and one day,

This page: Angela wears Coat, Sportsmax at Fenwick. Suit, Max & Co at Fenwick. Shirt, Madeleine
Opposite page: Angela wears Shirt, The Shirt Company. Trousers, Max & Co at Fenwick. Boots, Madeleine

> 'There were very few women in the newsroom when I started, but I didn't let that bother me. I just held my own'

[newsreader] Kenneth Kendall was on holiday. They'd mucked up the newsreader rotas in his absence, so the editor came into the office and offered me the chance to fill in for him. I just said, 'Yes, all right.' It was as casual as that.

People often ask me if I ever encountered misogyny at work; the truth is, I just didn't stand for nonsense. If I'd gone in acting like the tea girl, maybe it would have been different, but I'd worked in the studio, I'd done stints in Northern Ireland and I'd covered the oil crisis from Norway and Sweden – I'd proven I could do the job. There were very few women in the newsroom back then, but I didn't let that bother me. I just held my own.

What I did struggle with was the instant fame. For a short window, it was almost like I was a pop star. Wherever I went, the press would be there. I remember the *Daily Mirror* printing a back-shot of me and my then husband [Christopher Dare] at a horse show, with his arm around me. While I was flattered, I certainly wasn't comfortable with that level of interest in me. Then came *The Morecambe & Wise Show*, and I learned how big a public reaction could be!

KICKING UP MY HEELS

'The boys would like you to be in their Christmas special.' That's what Morecambe and Wise's producer, Ernest Maxin, told me over the phone in 1976. 'We thought you could sing a number.' I told him that I couldn't sing, but I could dance. We rehearsed our dance routine [which involved Angela performing her iconic high kick] three times and then we filmed it. It had quite the response, to put it mildly! I think the viewing figures were somewhere between 23m and 27m people. None of us could have guessed the impact it would have.

It doesn't bother me that people still want to talk about the special. For many people, I am their living link to Morecambe and Wise; I completely understand how much people adored them. Besides, they were such lovely people, so I'm very happy to talk about them. I remained friends with them and their wives, Joan and Doreen, for the rest of their lives, and I'm still in touch with Joan, who's in her 90s now.

Yes, I can still do a high kick. People often ask me to do one on demand. If I say no, then they'll only say, 'She can't do it any more,' so I have to oblige. I most recently did the splits on *The One Show,* but I was wearing jeans, which proved to be a bit solid!

FIT & FABULOUS

I have to be fit for my job and I like it – being unfit doesn't suit me. Sometimes, you've been filming ➔

for 12 hours non-stop – the audience doesn't know and doesn't care. You still have to be as bright-eyed and bushy-tailed at the end of the day as you were at the beginning. I play tennis, I stretch every day and I take dance lessons. I'm proud to be an ambassador for Silver Swans [the Royal Academy of Dance's classes for seniors].

Naturally, I'm aware of how I look on screen. It's a visual medium. I don't want to go on TV looking like I've been dragged through a hedge backwards, nor do I want someone to tune in while I'm telling them something of national importance and say, 'What is she wearing?' For me, looking good is a matter of self-respect, but it's also about having respect for my viewers; I strive to look professional for them. That said, once I've put my clothes and slap on, that's it – I no longer want to think about it. The job is more important.

ANGELA'S FEELGOOD TRICKS

My instant confidence booster is... **Perfume: Shalimar by Guerlain or Coco by Chanel.**

The piece of clothing that makes me feel good is... **A pair of high heels.**

When I want to relax, I... **Either sit and read a book or binge-watch television. I recently watched the whole of *Emily In Paris*, which was very fun.**

My perfect night is... **To cook for six friends at home. My crowd-pleasers include fish pie and roast salmon.**

My tipple of choice is... **Champagne.**

My favourite song is... ***I'm Still Here* from Sondheim's musical *Follies* – because I am!**

LOVE & RELATIONSHIPS

I've had long-term relationships since my marriage ended [in 1992], but I've kept them private. I was married for 25 years and when we were parting, Christopher told me, 'I just got fed up of people coming to our house all the time.' It made me realise that when you do a job that's public-facing, you have to respect the privacy of your partner. Hardly anybody – beyond my very close circle of friends – would know who my partners have been over the past several years.

I'm very fortunate to have a lot of men in my life – whom I adore – but who are not my partners. They are wonderful, genuine friends, without complications, who don't need any kind of emotional relationship from me. I've reached the stage where I'm very happy with that. I think it works for them and it certainly works for me.

My three godchildren are all grown-up – they have their own children now, to whom I'm Auntie Ange. Their mothers are my oldest friends, and we're all like one extended family. As I don't have children of my own, it's been lovely to indulge them and their kids – and then hand them back at the end of the day!

I have two social epicentres: one in London and one in Devon. In our spare time, my friends and I might go to the cinema, go to the theatre, have dinner together or play tennis. As for pets, I work and travel too much. People are always asking me, 'When are you going to retire?' I just say, 'You'll know I've retired the day you see me with a dog!'

MY NEXT STEPS

This year, I want to travel more – without a camera crew. I've travelled around the world for work, but I now want to travel just for me. I recently visited Thailand and Bhutan, and next I'm hoping to go to India, where I've never been. I even have my camera back out and I'm taking pictures again, which I'm loving.

I don't know when I'm going to drop off this perch, but there are lots of things I want to do. I don't want to die with the words 'If only' on my lips, so I say yes to opportunities. If people say, 'Do you want to present Crufts?', I say yes! If they ask me to do a quiz show, I say yes! It's not a 'can-do' attitude – it's a 'will-do' attitude.

• *Rip Off Britain returns later this year on BBC One*

Photography Nicky Johnston **Additional photography** BBC, Rex Shutterstock **Hair and makeup** Liz Kitchiner **Styling** Natalie Read **Angela wears** Shirt, Bite at Fenwick. Skirt, ASOS. Shoes (just seen), L.K.Bennett

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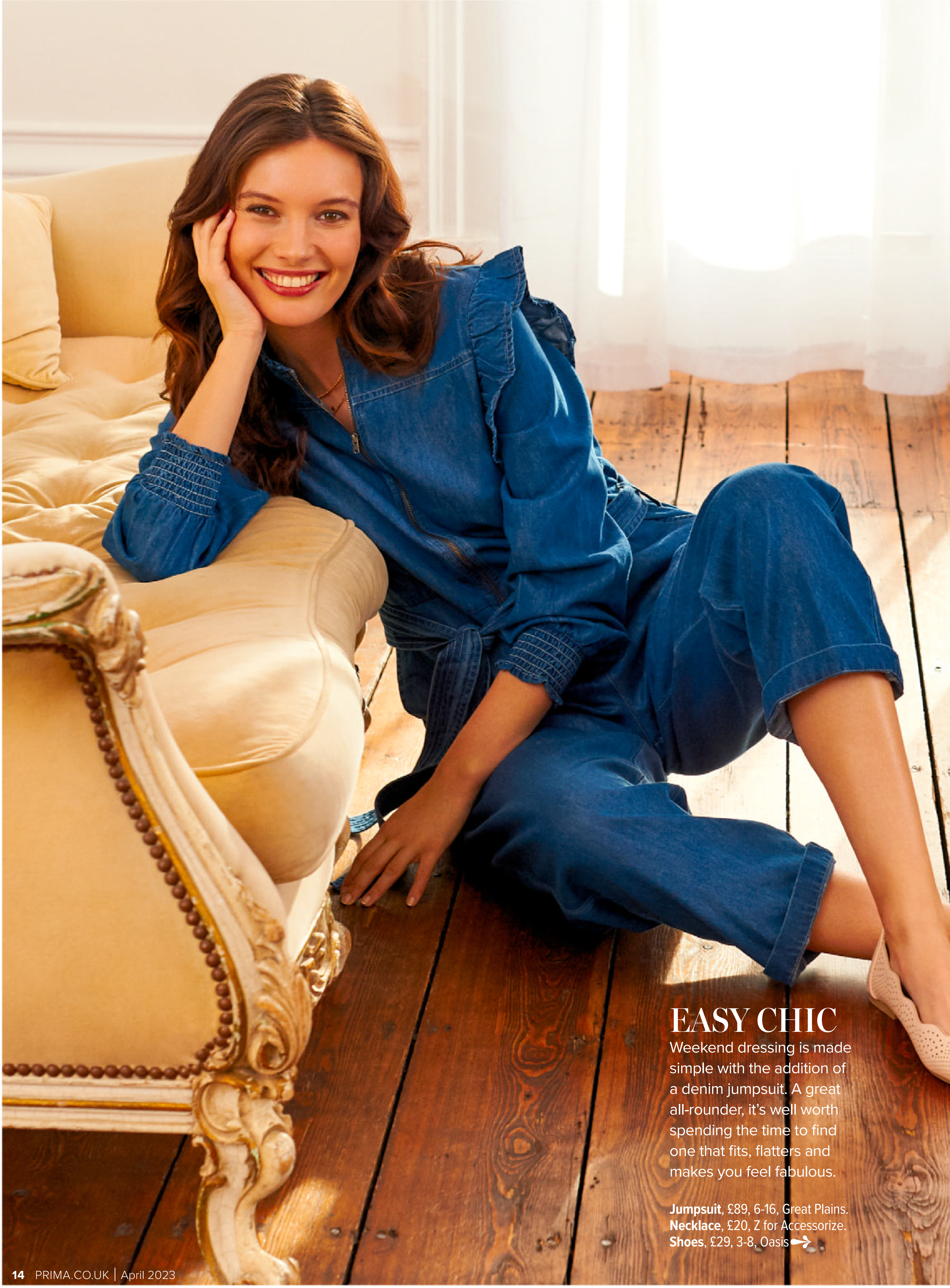
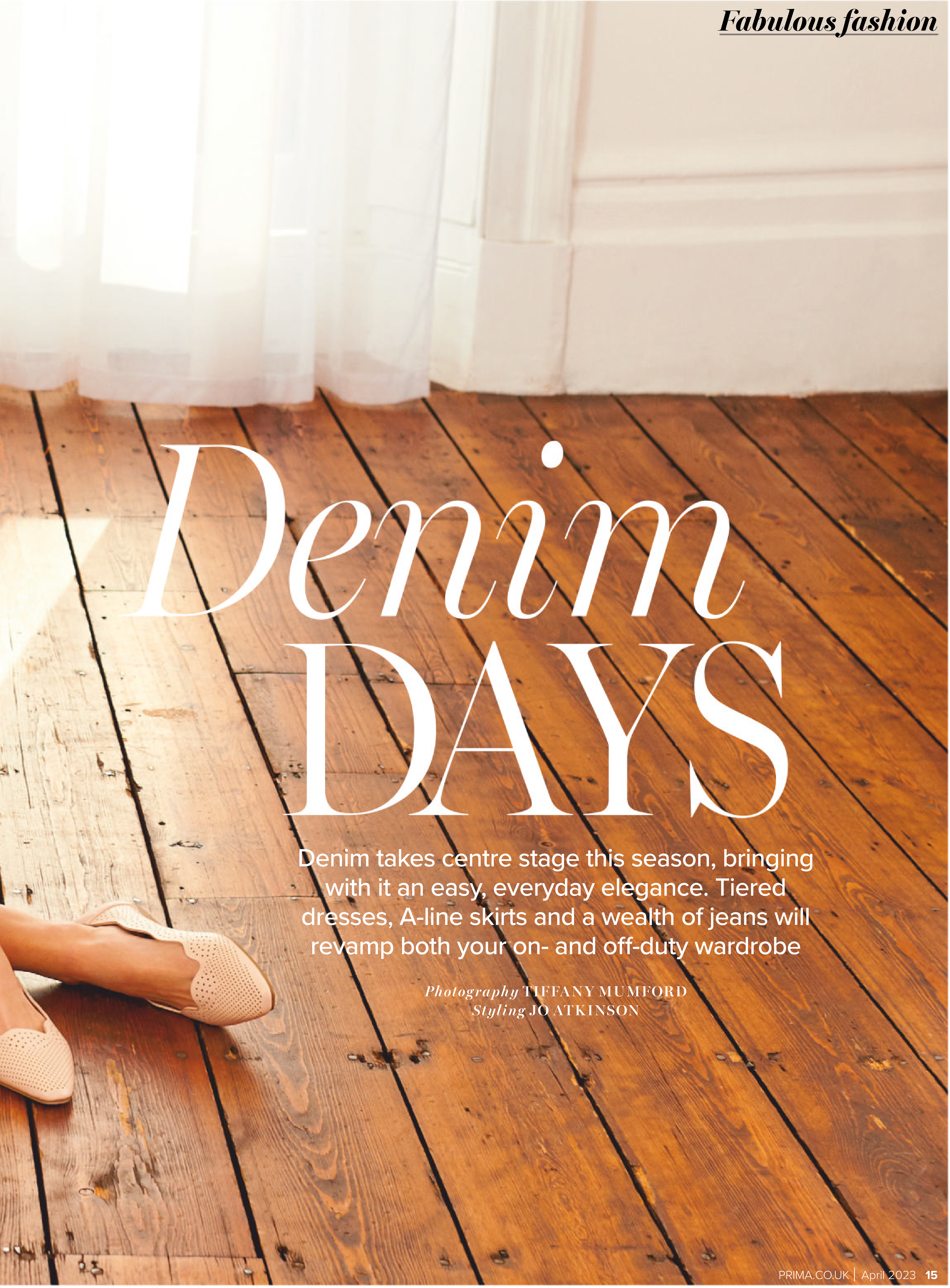


EASY CHIC

Weekend dressing is made simple with the addition of a denim jumpsuit. A great all-rounder, it's well worth spending the time to find one that fits, flatters and makes you feel fabulous.

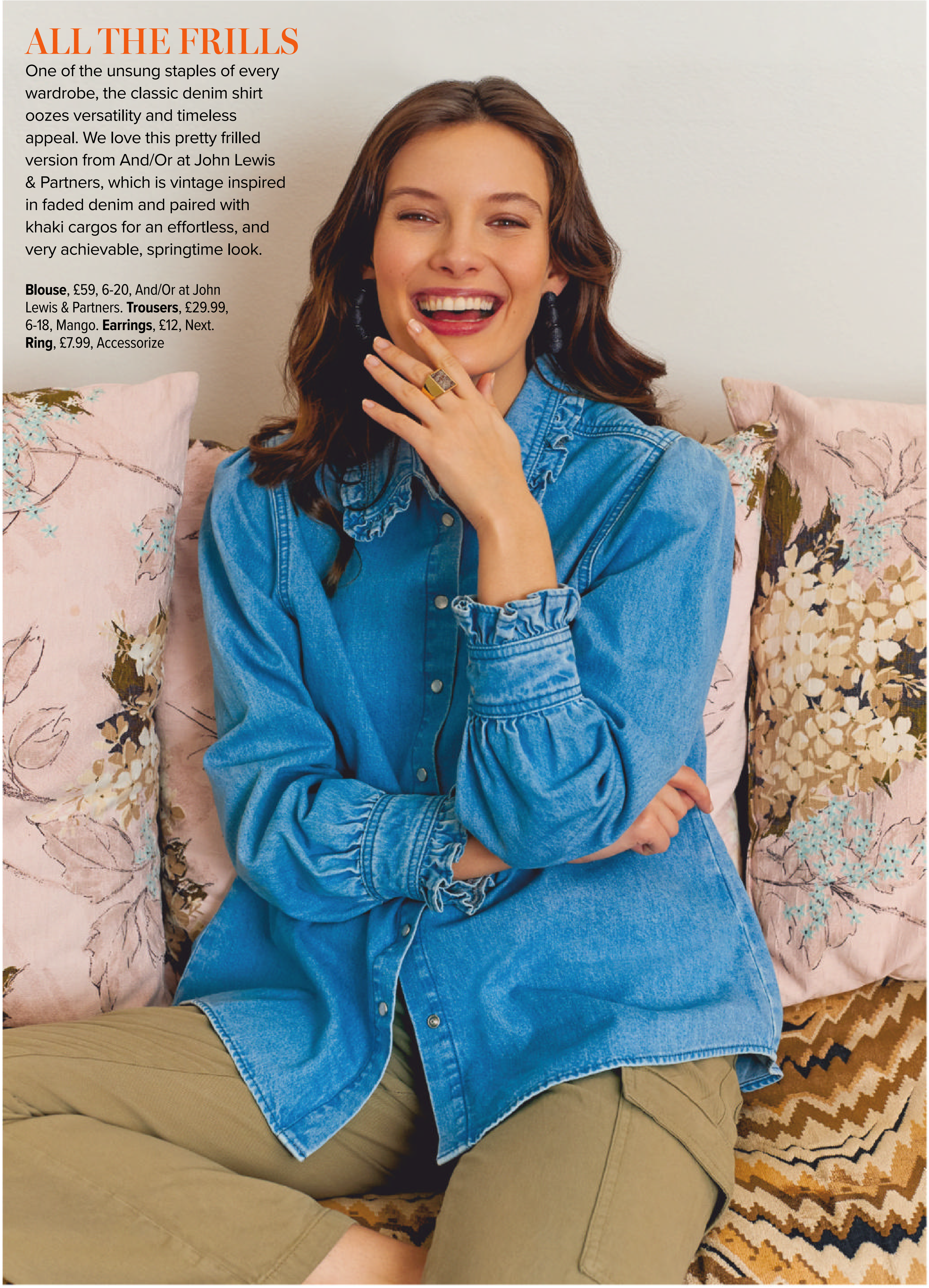
Jumpsuit, £89, 6-16, Great Plains.
Necklace, £20, Z for Accessorize.
Shoes, £29, 3-8, Oasis →



Denim DAYS

Denim takes centre stage this season, bringing with it an easy, everyday elegance. Tiered dresses, A-line skirts and a wealth of jeans will revamp both your on- and off-duty wardrobe

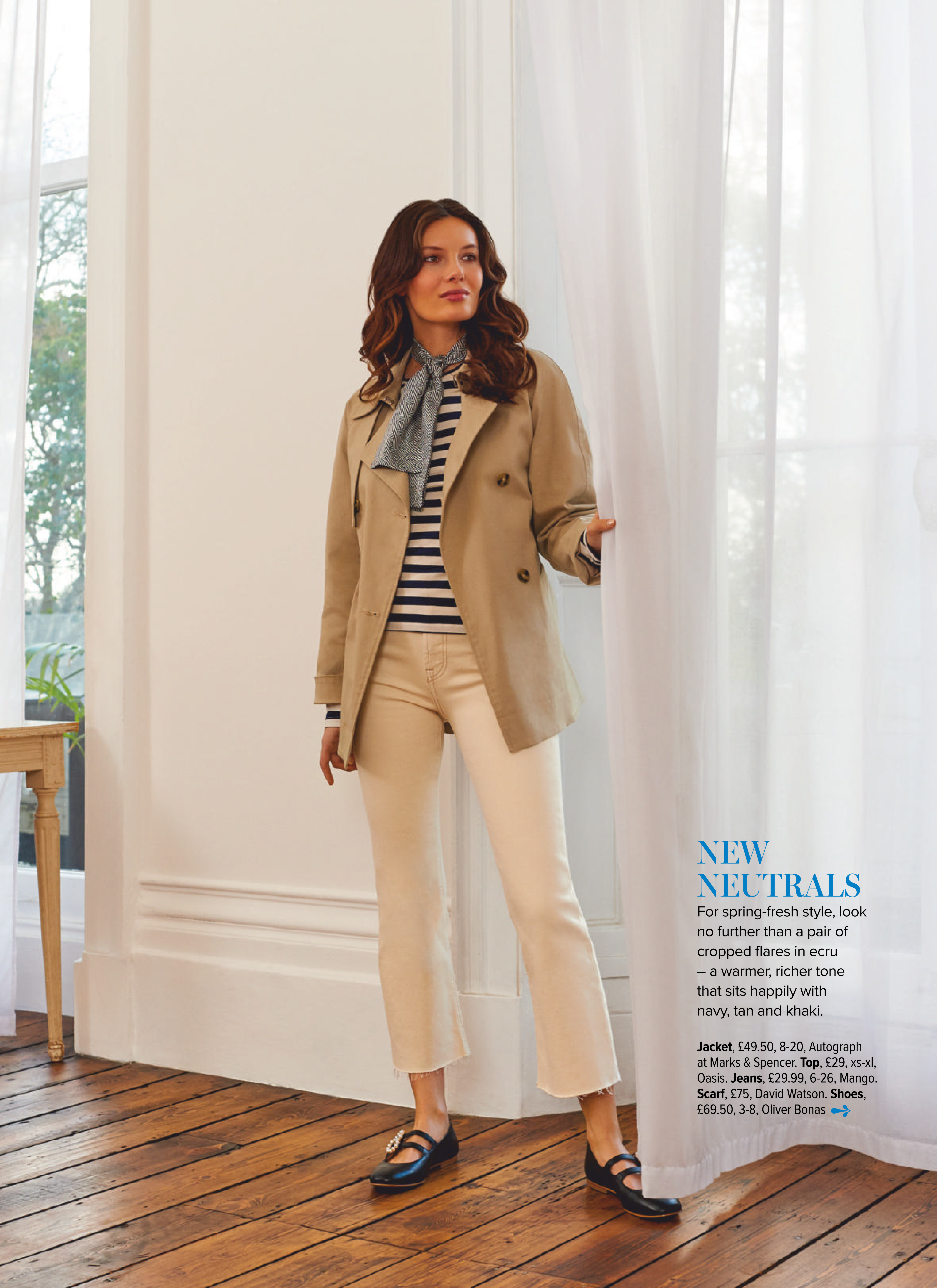
Photography TIFFANY MUMFORD
Styling JO ATKINSON



ALL THE FRILLS

One of the unsung staples of every wardrobe, the classic denim shirt oozes versatility and timeless appeal. We love this pretty frilled version from And/Or at John Lewis & Partners, which is vintage inspired in faded denim and paired with khaki cargos for an effortless, and very achievable, springtime look.

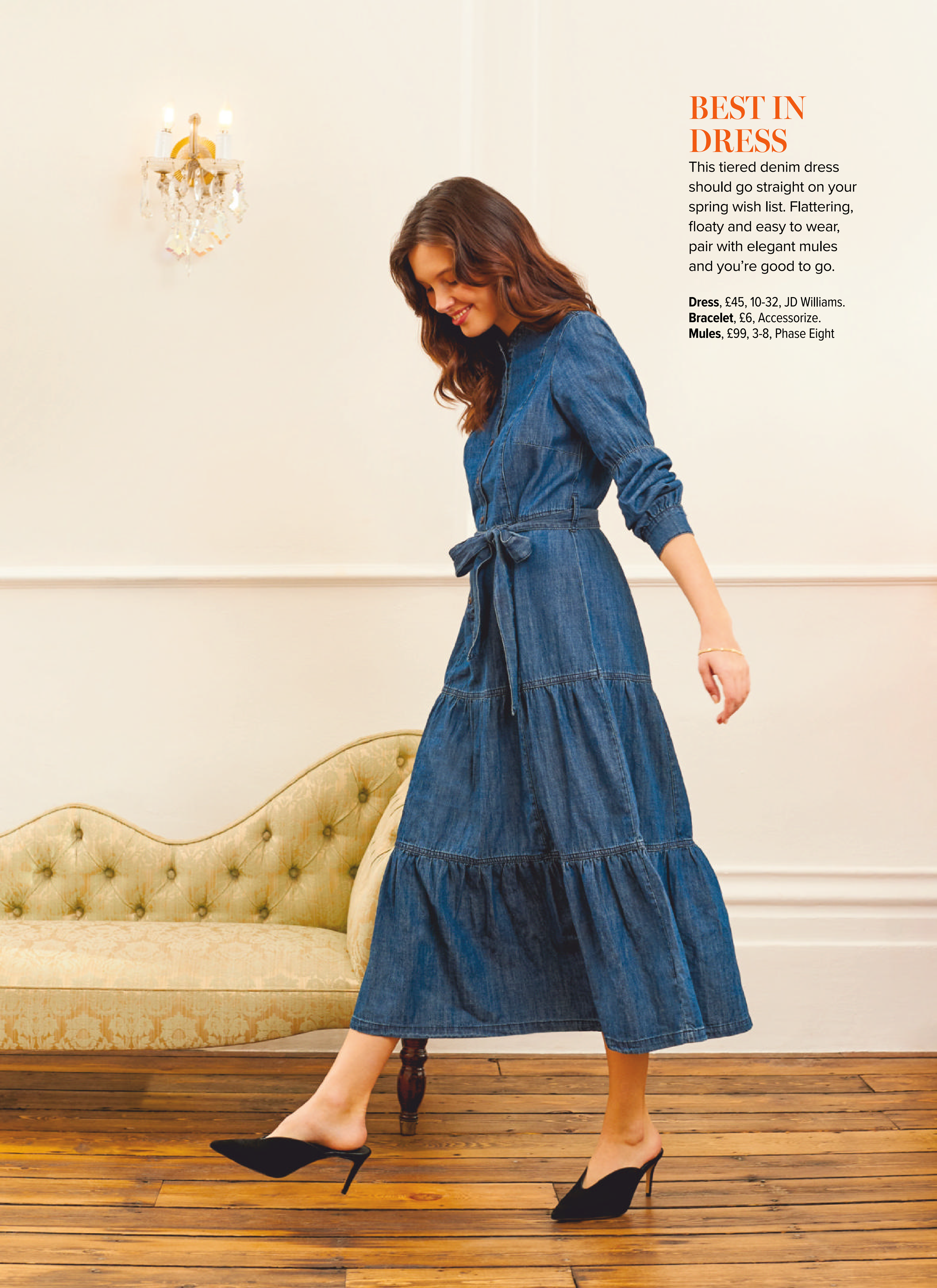
Blouse, £59, 6-20, And/Or at John Lewis & Partners. **Trousers**, £29.99, 6-18, Mango. **Earrings**, £12, Next. **Ring**, £7.99, Accessorize



NEW NEUTRALS

For spring-fresh style, look no further than a pair of cropped flares in ecru – a warmer, richer tone that sits happily with navy, tan and khaki.

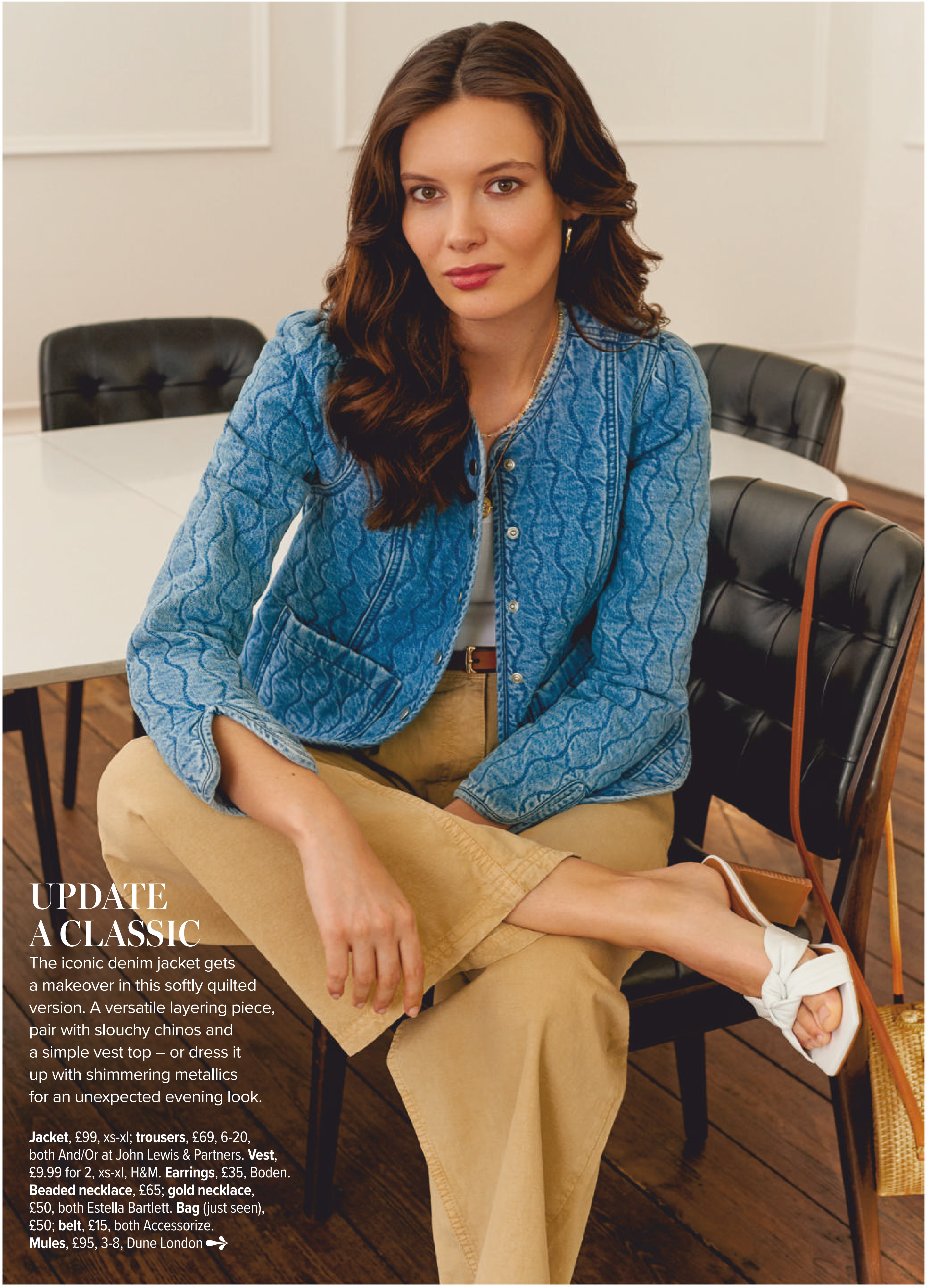
Jacket, £49.50, 8-20, Autograph at Marks & Spencer. **Top**, £29, xs-xl, Oasis. **Jeans**, £29.99, 6-26, Mango. **Scarf**, £75, David Watson. **Shoes**, £69.50, 3-8, Oliver Bonas



BEST IN DRESS

This tiered denim dress should go straight on your spring wish list. Flattering, floaty and easy to wear, pair with elegant mules and you're good to go.

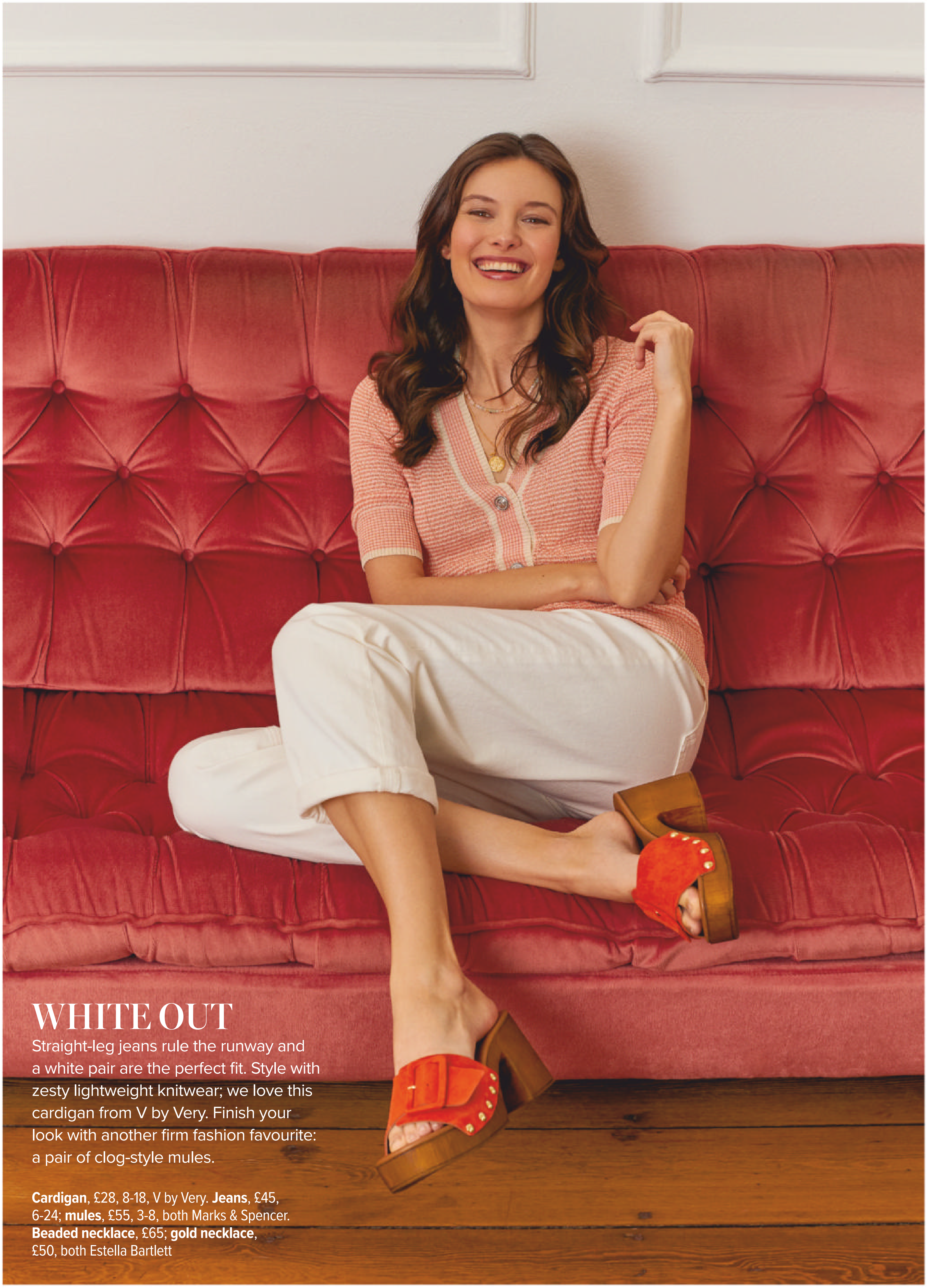
Dress, £45, 10-32, JD Williams.
Bracelet, £6, Accessorize.
Mules, £99, 3-8, Phase Eight



UPDATE A CLASSIC

The iconic denim jacket gets a makeover in this softly quilted version. A versatile layering piece, pair with slouchy chinos and a simple vest top – or dress it up with shimmering metallics for an unexpected evening look.

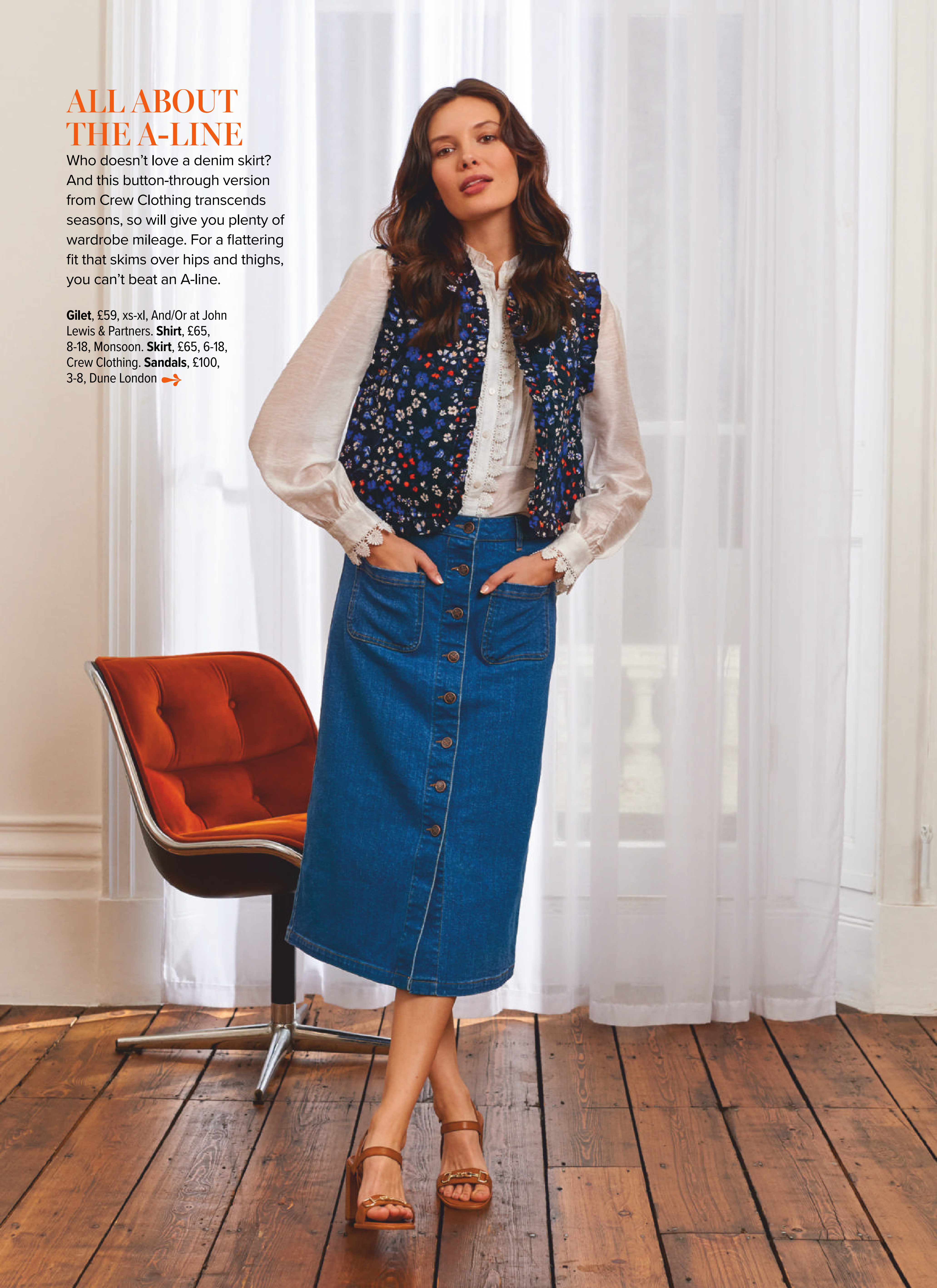
Jacket, £99, xs-xl; **trousers**, £69, 6-20, both And/Or at John Lewis & Partners. **Vest**, £9.99 for 2, xs-xl, H&M. **Earrings**, £35, Boden. **Beaded necklace**, £65; **gold necklace**, £50, both Estella Bartlett. **Bag** (just seen), £50; **belt**, £15, both Accessorize. **Mules**, £95, 3-8, Dune London



WHITE OUT

Straight-leg jeans rule the runway and a white pair are the perfect fit. Style with zesty lightweight knitwear; we love this cardigan from V by Very. Finish your look with another firm fashion favourite: a pair of clog-style mules.

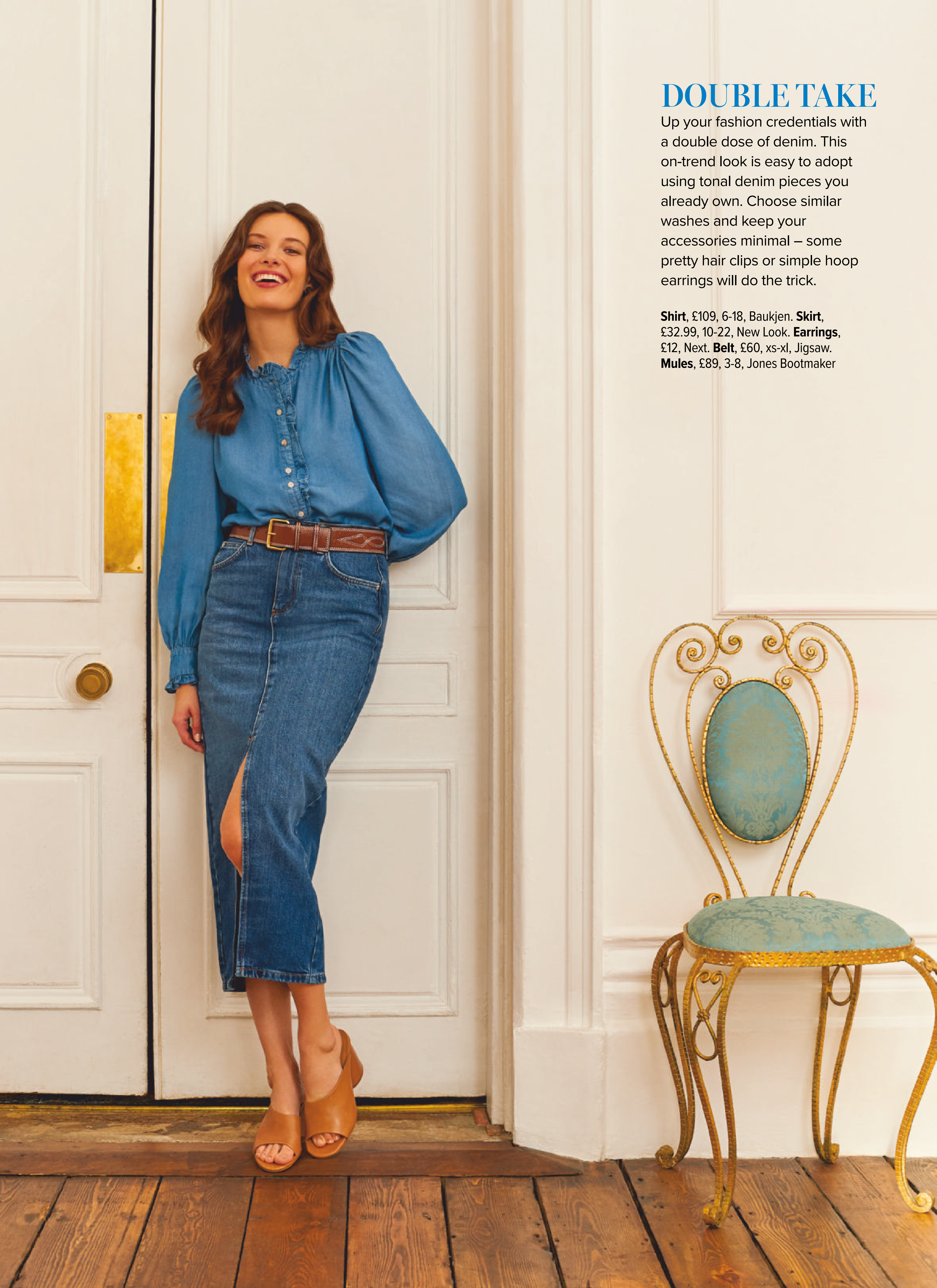
Cardigan, £28, 8-18, V by Very. **Jeans**, £45, 6-24; **mules**, £55, 3-8, both Marks & Spencer. **Beaded necklace**, £65; **gold necklace**, £50, both Estella Bartlett



ALL ABOUT THE A-LINE

Who doesn't love a denim skirt? And this button-through version from Crew Clothing transcends seasons, so will give you plenty of wardrobe mileage. For a flattering fit that skims over hips and thighs, you can't beat an A-line.

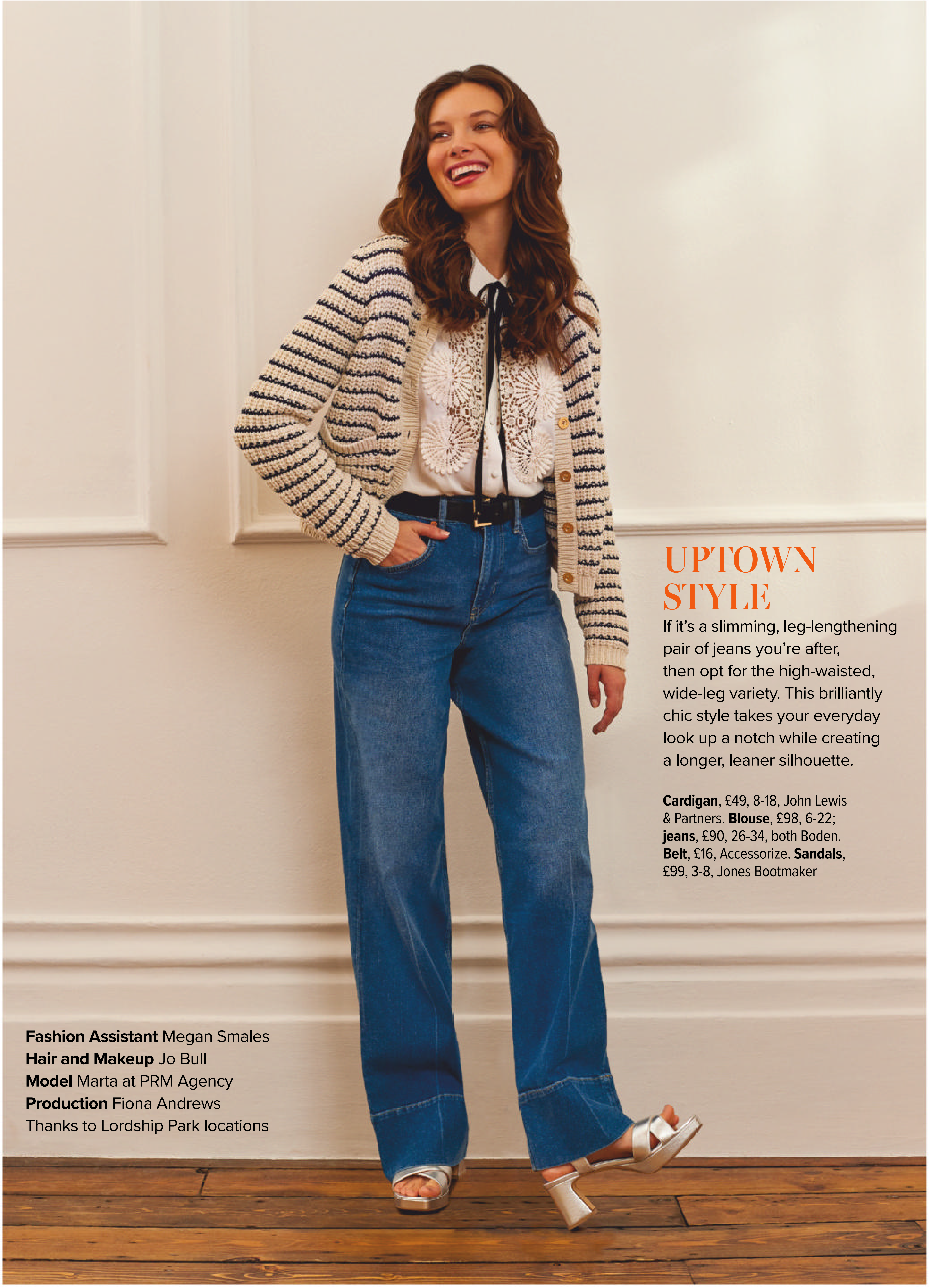
Gilet, £59, xs-xl, And/Or at John Lewis & Partners. **Shirt**, £65, 8-18, Monsoon. **Skirt**, £65, 6-18, Crew Clothing. **Sandals**, £100, 3-8, Dune London



DOUBLE TAKE

Up your fashion credentials with a double dose of denim. This on-trend look is easy to adopt using tonal denim pieces you already own. Choose similar washes and keep your accessories minimal – some pretty hair clips or simple hoop earrings will do the trick.

Shirt, £109, 6-18, Baukjen. **Skirt**, £32.99, 10-22, New Look. **Earrings**, £12, Next. **Belt**, £60, xs-xl, Jigsaw. **Mules**, £89, 3-8, Jones Bootmaker



UPTOWN STYLE

If it's a slimming, leg-lengthening pair of jeans you're after, then opt for the high-waisted, wide-leg variety. This brilliantly chic style takes your everyday look up a notch while creating a longer, leaner silhouette.

Cardigan, £49, 8-18, John Lewis & Partners. **Blouse**, £98, 6-22; **jeans**, £90, 26-34, both Boden. **Belt**, £16, Accessorize. **Sandals**, £99, 3-8, Jones Bootmaker

Fashion Assistant Megan Smales
Hair and Makeup Jo Bull
Model Marta at PRM Agency
Production Fiona Andrews
Thanks to Lordship Park locations

Light & bright

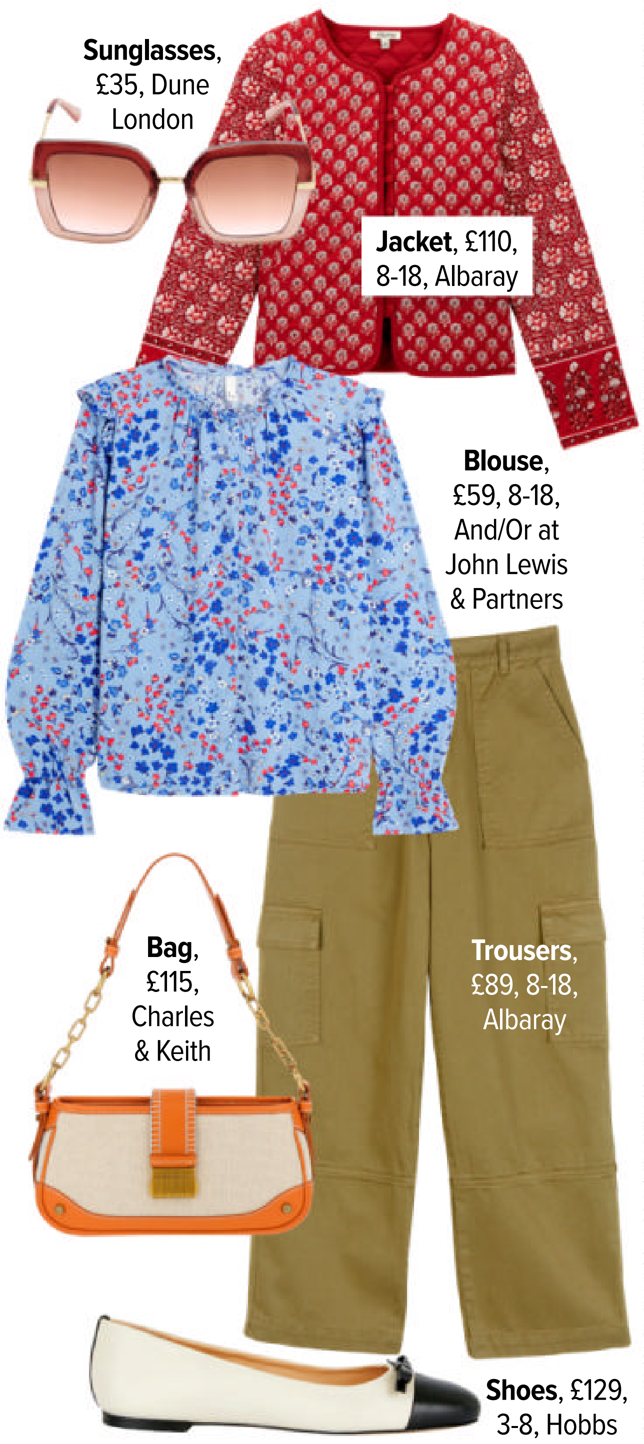
TRY it, BUY it, WEAR it...

jackets

Put away those big, dark coats and embrace lighter layers in gorgeous colours for a fresh new look

Artisan style

Go all-out in ditsy prints with a lightly padded, homespun-style jacket.



Sunglasses, £35, Dune London

Jacket, £110, 8-18, Albaray

Blouse, £59, 8-18, And/Or at John Lewis & Partners

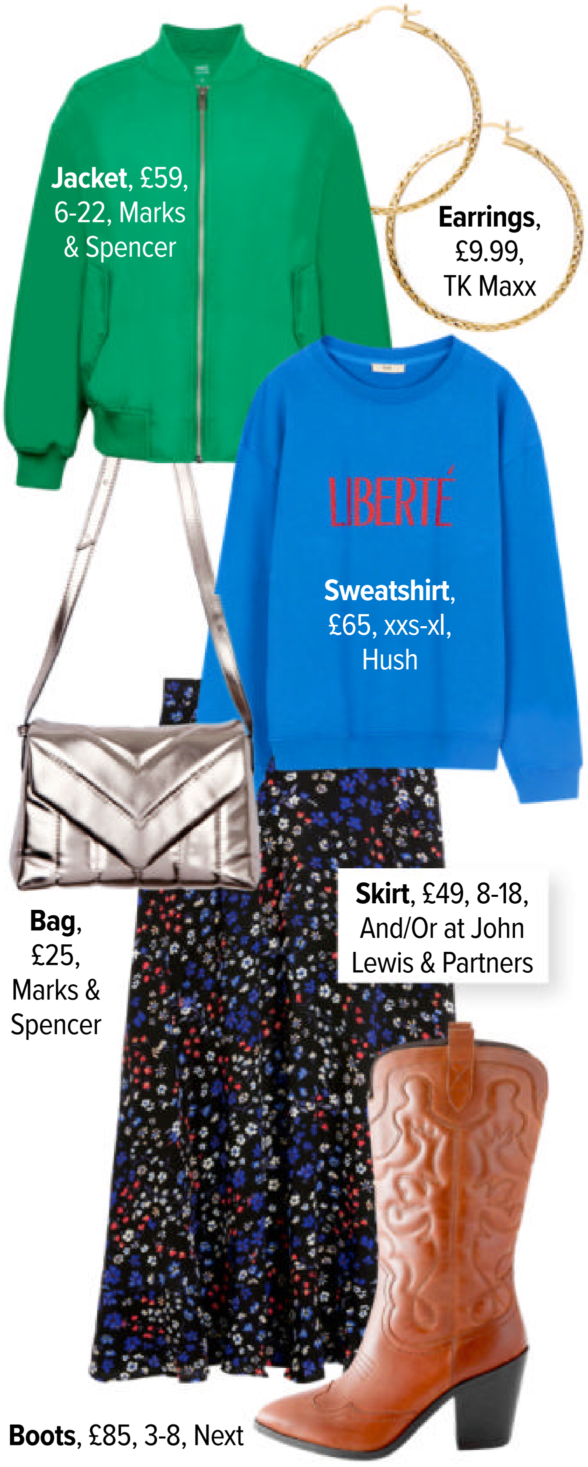
Bag, £115, Charles & Keith

Trousers, £89, 8-18, Albaray

Shoes, £129, 3-8, Hobbs

Bold bombers

Happy hues are the order of the day when it comes to this season's bomber jackets.



Jacket, £59, 6-22, Marks & Spencer

Earrings, £9.99, TK Maxx

Sweatshirt, £65, xxs-xl, Hush

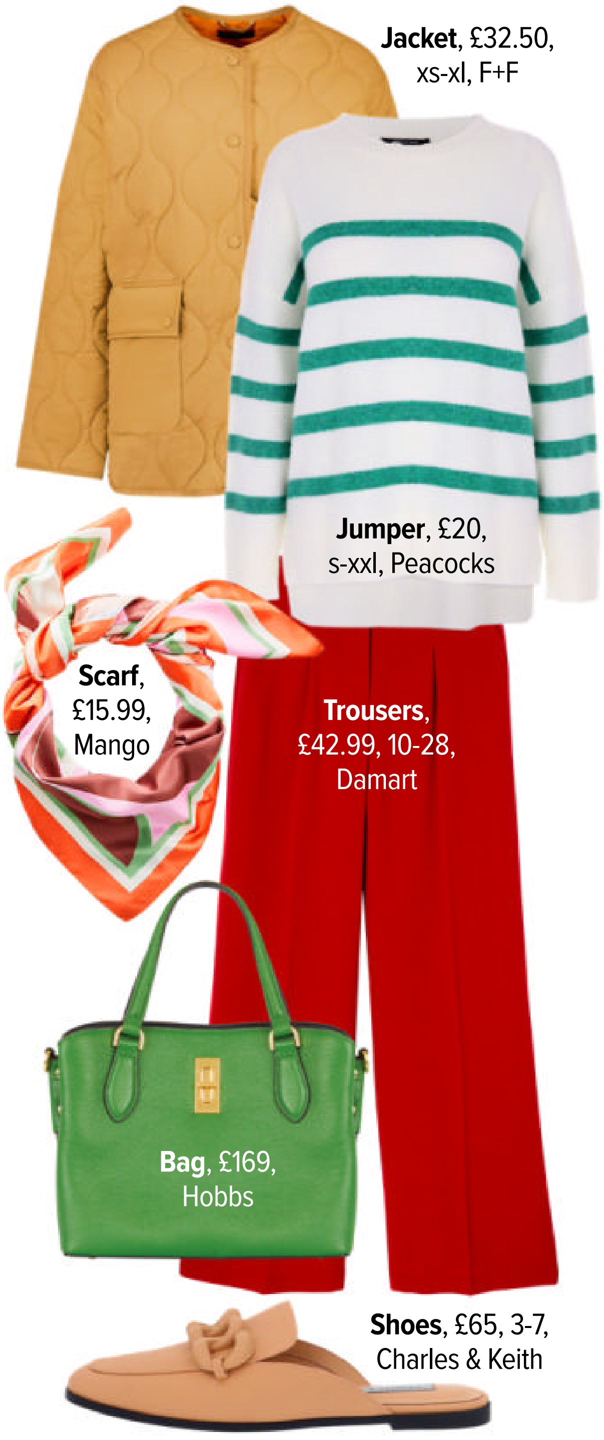
Bag, £25, Marks & Spencer

Skirt, £49, 8-18, And/Or at John Lewis & Partners

Boots, £85, 3-8, Next

Cosy quilting

This sporty style offers plenty of warmth but without the added bulk of a puffa.



Jacket, £32.50, xs-xl, F+F

Jumper, £20, s-xxl, Peacocks

Scarf, £15.99, Mango

Trousers, £42.99, 10-28, Damart

Bag, £169, Hobbs

Shoes, £65, 3-7, Charles & Keith

Top trench

A lifesaver for those in-between days, when we never know what our inclement weather will throw at us. A trench coat is a great layering piece to wear over your spring jacket when you need that added warmth.

Try gelato colours for a springtime look

£95, 6-22, Next

£89, 6-18, River Island

Trench coat, £89.99; **shirt**, £49.99; **jeans**, £36.99, all 10-28, Damart

Love your lapels

Add vintage glamour to your outerwear with the addition of a twinkly brooch.

£20, Pia Jewellery

£38, Butler & Wilson

£65, Susan Caplan

£28, La Redoute

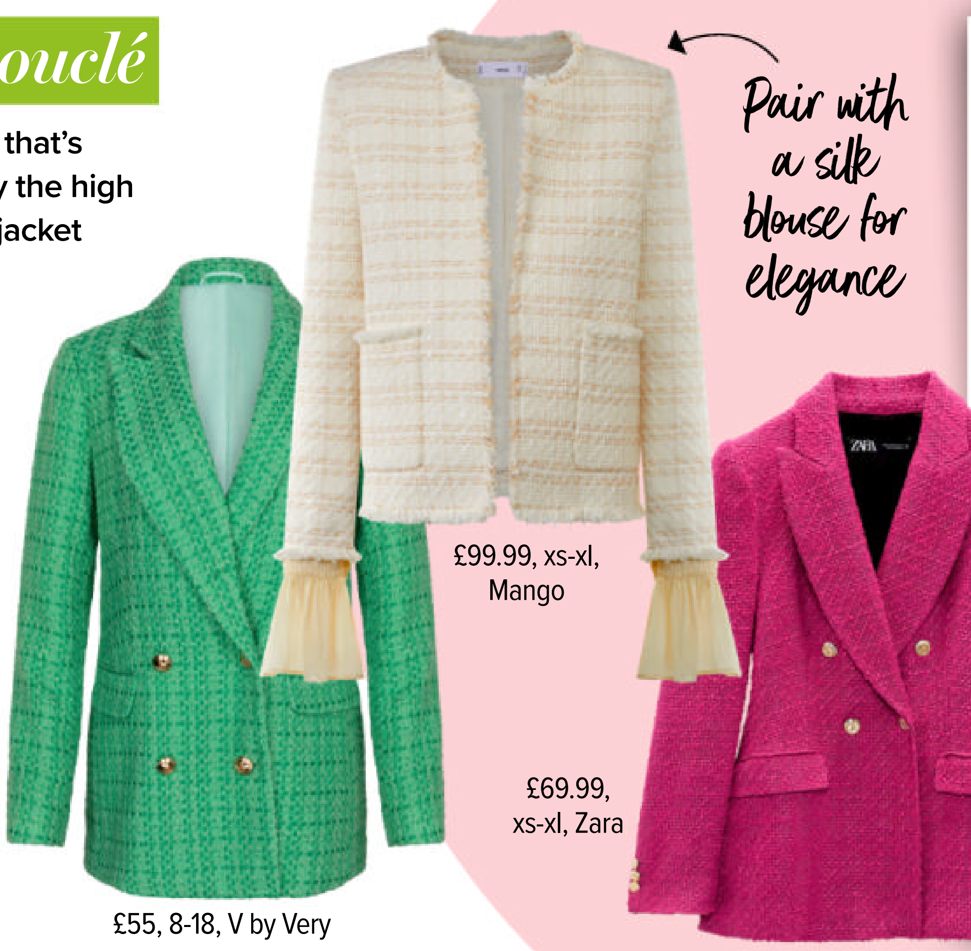
£25, Jon Richard

Adds extra sparkle - day or night

Best in bouclé

A designer classic that's been embraced by the high street, the bouclé jacket is big news this spring. Take your pick from an array of punchy colours, seasonal pastels or muted tones with metallic threads. These highly versatile jackets are great for every occasion.

Pair with a silk blouse for elegance



£55, 8-18, V by Very

£99.99, xs-xl, Mango

£69.99, xs-xl, Zara

Jacket, £62, 6-22, Cotton Traders

Compiled by Jo Atkinson

prima

OFFER FOR YOU!

WE ALL DESERVE A TREAT THIS MONTH

Left: **Blazer**, £30; **racer vest**, £8; **jeans**, £25; **midi dress**, £25, all 8-22. This image: **Jacket**, £32; **jumper**, £20; **jeans**, £25, all 8-22

20% off Peacocks

Available in 340 stores and online, Peacocks offers fashion for all the family at affordable prices

Refresh your wardrobe at Peacocks, with new-season styles you can wear on repeat. The latest spring/summer collection features everything you need this season at budget-friendly prices – from feminine printed dresses and blouses you can feel confident in, to lightweight knits and jackets to complete any look. With Mother's Day approaching, discover the perfect gift for Mum, including satin nightwear sets, accessories and on-trend styles that will make her feel her best. Enjoy 20% off full-price items – an offer for *Prima* readers to use both in-store and online. The offer applies to menswear and kidswear styles, too.

HOW TO CLAIM

To receive your 20% discount code, visit **prima.co.uk/offersapr23** and follow the instructions. You can redeem your discount at peacocks.co.uk from 20 February to 29 March 2023.

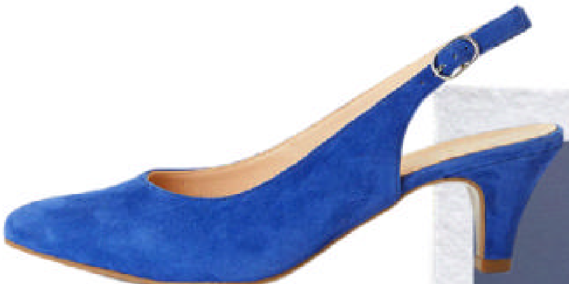
TERMS & CONDITIONS Go to prima.co.uk/offersapr23 for your promotional code to receive 20% off full-priced items in-store and online at Peacocks. Enter promotional code online at checkouts and quote code in-store at checkouts to redeem offer. Excludes sale goods, gift cards, concessions and electricals. Voucher cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer or discount and is subject to availability. This offer is valid from 20 February to 29 March 2023

Love a slingback

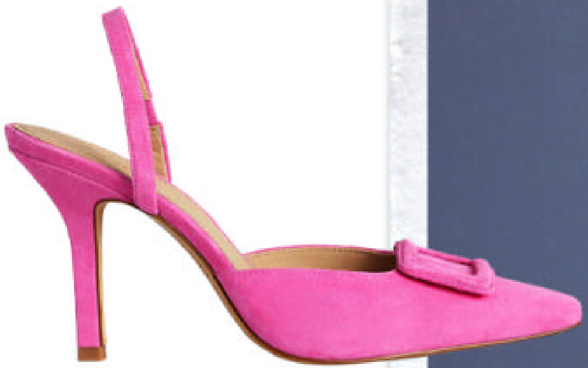
Add some zing to every outfit with a pair of sunshine slingbacks

Pair with jeans for a classic look

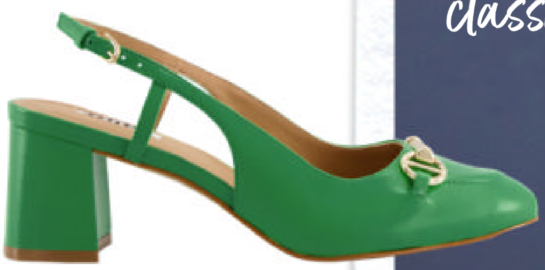
Rollneck, £20, xs-xl; **jeans**, £38, 6-22; **shoes**, £42, 3-9, all Next



£75, 3-8, John Lewis & Partners

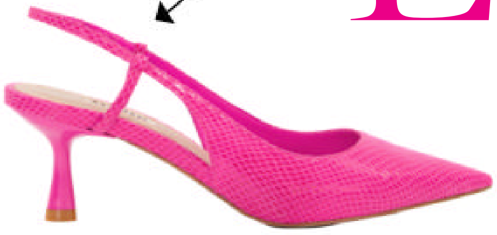


£130, 3-8, Boden

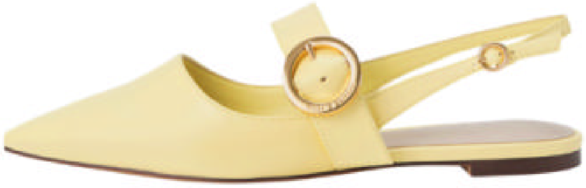


£90, 3-8, Dune London

Embrace this season's neon trend

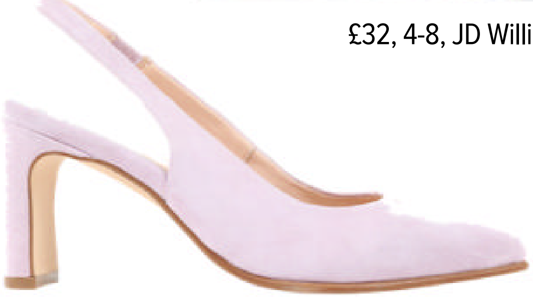


£85, 3-7, Dune London

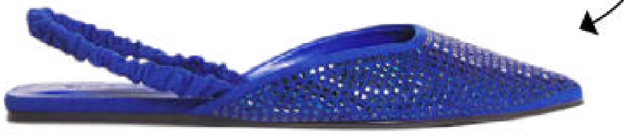


£65, 2-8, Charles & Keith

Neutral tones make for easier outfit pairings

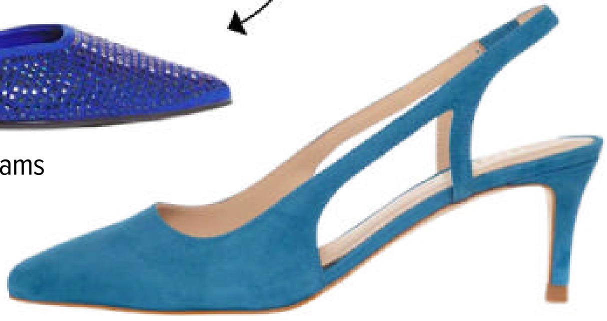


£99, 3-8, Jones Bootmaker

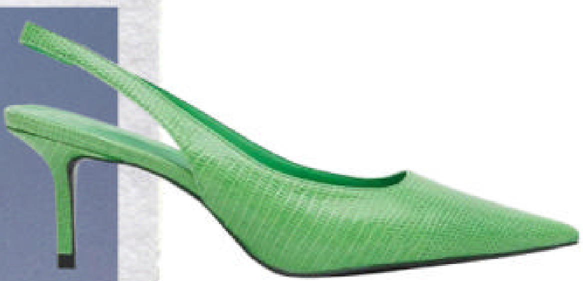


£32, 4-8, JD Williams

We'll be sliding these on for spring

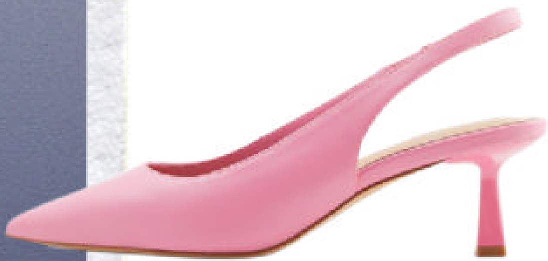


£139, 3-8, Hobbs

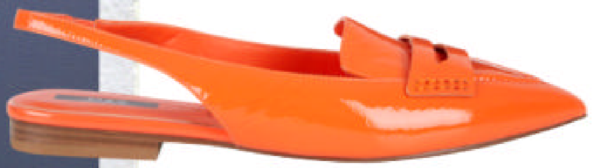


£36, 2-7, Mango

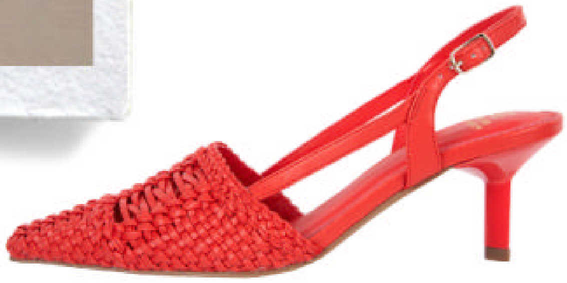
Zesty colours give an effortless twist to an outfit



£70, 3-8, Aldo



£45, 3-8, Marks & Spencer



£48, 3-7, Next

Compiled by Jo Atkinson

It's never TOO LATE *to* REVAMP YOUR LOOK!

If you're stuck in a rut when it comes to your appearance and feel there's no way out, think again. These three women overhauled their image and have never looked back…

‘When I look at myself now, I see the real me’

CLAIRE OWEN, 48, a life coach and author from Criccieth, North Wales, made a bold decision during lockdown.

Claire used to spend hours in the salon to keep her hair dark brown

Sitting in the salon chair, I sighed with exasperation that yet another Saturday afternoon was being wasted having chemicals slathered on my hair to keep my greys at bay. While my family were off having fun together, I was stuck looking at my bored reflection in the mirror, waiting for my colour to develop.

Thankfully, those days are gone now. I haven’t set foot in a hairdresser’s since February 2020 and have gained not only time, but many hundreds of pounds, after deciding to embrace my natural silver hair. Best of all, I feel more authentic and attractive than I ever have before.

I started going grey in my early 20s and was horrified. Like many younger women, I negatively associated it with ageing and unattractiveness. For the next 20 years, I was a devotee of hair colour. I’d visit the salon monthly and also used box dyes at home. I spent thousands of pounds keeping my hair dark brown.

TAKING A LEAP

As I got older, I did admire silver-haired celebrities, such as Dame Helen Mirren, who I thought looked beautiful, but never imagined I’d have the courage to make that leap myself. That changed after I gave up alcohol in early 2018. I wasn’t in crisis, I was just drinking too much and I’d grown tired of feeling lethargic and fuzzy and lacking in self-belief as a result of it.

One month of sobriety turned into two, then three, and after that I decided to make it a permanent change to my lifestyle because I felt so good, both physically and mentally. From that decision flowed benefits such as better sleep, clear skin and eyes and a sense of clarity and confidence in myself and my decisions; the self-doubt that used to plague me went away.

Feeling like a better, and more natural, version of myself, I began to look at my hair and ponder the idea of stopping my battle with the greys. Yet I still wasn’t convinced and opted for a blonde look. I soon regretted that decision as I didn’t like the brassy tones; then lockdown began in March 2020 and salons closed. At first, I felt panicked, what on earth was I meant to do without my regular colour appointment? However, as the days and weeks went past, and my greys started to take over, I didn’t hate what I saw. My husband, Gwil, and sons, William, now 12, and Sam, 11, loved the ‘two-tone’ look, too.

> ‘I’m not hiding behind a fake hair colour any more’

In summer 2020, when things started to open again, I wanted my hair cut, but I worried that a hairdresser may tempt me to get it coloured again. So, I went to my son’s barber and asked him to chop it off, right up to my ears, which he did without question. I looked at my reflection when he’d finished and smiled. I’d never felt so happy with my hair. Gwil told me my new hairstyle was the best I’d ever looked.

Since then, my approach to my hair is so low-maintenance. I let it dry naturally and embrace my natural curls rather than straighten it like I used to. I occasionally use a purple shampoo to keep my silver tones bright and I continue to get it cut at the barber’s because it’s quick, cheap and I love the short, choppy look he gives me.

I’ve had so many compliments on my hair and a lot of women tell me they love it but aren’t brave enough to do it themselves. I always encourage them to give it a try because they won’t regret it.

I realise that, during those years I spent getting my hair coloured, I was trying to be something I wasn’t. I’m not hiding behind a fake colour any more. When I look at my hair, I see the real me, someone who had the courage to make a decision, sit out the transition and embrace a new image in her 40s. It feels like a symbolic part of my appearance and I’ll never colour it again.

• *thesoberholic.com* ➔

Claire wears (Opposite page) Dress, Zara. Earrings, Accessorize. Belt, Hobbs. Sandals, Sante + Wade.
(This page) Jumper, & Other Stories. Skirt, Reserved. Earrings, Matalan. Belt, stylist’s own. Shoes, Deichmann

‘I finally broke the cycle of yo-yo dieting’

Mum-of-three TRACY HARMSWORTH, 48, a carer from Faversham, Kent, knew she had to take action for the sake of her family.

Crossing the finish line of my first half marathon in 2020, I felt exhausted but elated. The old me couldn’t have run for a bus, she was so overweight and unfit, but I’m not her any more. I’ve transformed my body and health, and I still get surprised when I look in the mirror and see a size 12, happy and confident woman smiling back at me.

For as long as I can remember, I have been overweight, as were my parents. Our family diet wasn’t great, but I also believe we had a genetic disposition to being overweight. My parents tried really hard, many times, to lose weight, realising that it wasn’t good for their health to be the way they were. I remember that Mum once lost 12st and Dad lost 16st, but they would always put it back on again.

As an adult, I became a yo-yo dieter, too. By the time I got married to Steve in 1998, when I was 23, I weighed 18st and was a size 24.

My diet was terrible – full of processed food, takeaways and large bars of chocolate – and I did no exercise. I’d go on a fad diet or join up to a slimming class and successfully lose weight, but I’d inevitably slip up and go back to my old ways.

My size never mattered to Steve – he loved me for who I was. Looking back, I can see I played the part of the jolly, fat friend when I was out, convincing myself I didn’t care.

I carried on gaining and losing weight throughout the years I had my children, Lucas, now 23, William, 21, and Archie, 12 – and at my heaviest, I reached 23½st and was a size 28. I ached all over and constantly felt exhausted.

But it wasn’t my own deteriorating health that shocked me into finally tackling my weight for good – it was my parents’. As they got older, they

At her heaviest, Tracy weighed 23½st and was a size 28

‘I have transformed my body and my health’

developed problems linked to their weight, including type 2 diabetes, leg ulcers and cardiac issues. My eldest son, Lucas, has Down syndrome and I felt scared that I'd end up like them and not be around for him.

I made the drastic decision in 2012 to have a gastric band fitted, but it snapped and I ended up in hospital with sepsis. It was a scary time and I was so poorly that, by the following year, aged 38, I decided to overhaul my diet and lifestyle once and for all and do it on my own. By now, I was around 18st and I was determined that this time, it would be different.

Instead of skipping breakfast, then grazing on sandwiches, crisps and biscuits before a big Chinese takeaway and wine in the evening, I began to have cereal and fruit, a salad wrap and yogurt for lunch, then a home-made Quorn and veg curry.

I started running, steadily building up my stamina and, after joining a running club, ran a half marathon in 2020. Nobody was more surprised than me when I finished it.

EMOTIONAL MOMENT

Last year, in June 2022, I climbed Snowdon and when I reached the summit, I thought about my dad, who had sadly passed away the year before, and how very proud he'd be of what I'd achieved. It was an emotional moment.

I also took up weight training to tone and strengthen my body and I now work out weekly with a local PT called Corinne Murphy, as well as going for eight-mile walks at the weekend. Knowing how good it will make me feel drives me on.

Of course, I do slip up from time to time, but I don't allow myself to feel guilty. The next day, I simply start over again. In the past, I'd have berated myself, then thrown in the towel on healthy eating, too disappointed in myself to carry on. I've broken that toxic cycle now.

Today, I'm a size 12 and weigh 11st 2lb, which I am very happy with. Steve, my sons and my family and friends have been so supportive and my mum is very proud, as my dad would be, too. I have so much respect for how hard they both tried to lose weight themselves and I know it makes them happy that I have finally done it. Best of all, I'm so happy that I've tried my best to futureproof my health to be around for Lucas and my other children for many years to come.

'My friend told me, "Be you, be different"'

SOPHIA HUSBANDS, 43, a lifestyle and wellness brand owner from Windsor, Berkshire, learned a very special message.

Walking through my local town recently, a woman stopped me to tell me how much she loved my cream faux-fur coat. It's from the 1970s and is one of my favourite pieces in my wardrobe. I was so flattered by her compliment; it's the sort of thing that never would have happened before I began to revamp my style four years ago.

Back then, when it came to style, I played it safe, following high street trends and never standing out from the crowd. I worked in finance, so Monday to Friday, I wore business suits, and at the weekends, I stuck to jeans and tops or dresses. I looked smart and always dressed up for occasions, but wore nothing that deviated from what was in fashion.

In 2019, I spent three months in the US, staying with my friend Regina at her home in Maryland. We'd met by chance a few years earlier on a flight from London to Germany, where she was originally from, and got chatting after I noticed her vibrantly coloured scarf and told her how much I liked it. She worked in the fashion industry and specialised in buying and selling vintage, designer and avant-garde clothes. Even though she was 17 years older than me, we bonded and forged a wonderful friendship.

I went on that trip to the US feeling a bit low and in need of a chance to hit pause on my life and reassess. I was on the cusp of turning 40 and still single, which isn't where I had wanted to be at that stage in life, and earlier that year, I'd been involved in ➔

Tracy wears (Far left) Jacket, Primark. Jumper, Oasis. Trousers, H&M. Earrings, Matalan. Belt (just seen), Hobbs. Trainers, French Connection. **(Left)** Dress, Never Fully Dressed at Hirestreet. **Sophia wears** Top; jewellery, all Sophia's own. Skirt, Sosandar. Shoes, JD Williams

a traumatic car crash that had left me shaken and realising that life is short. My mum had also been diagnosed with dementia and I'd been caring for her.

It was while I was with Regina on that holiday that my love for eclectic fashion began to develop. I accompanied her on a couple of road trips, including one to Chicago, visiting vintage fashion events, flea markets and specialist shops, and encouraged by her, I began to experiment with my personal style.

After conforming for so long when it came to my clothes, it felt daunting trying on outfits with vivid patterns and pieces that were made before I was even born, but Regina's motto was, 'Be you, be different', and I felt inspired and liberated by it.

NEWFOUND CONFIDENCE

I flew home in July 2019 with a suitcase full of new clothes, a new confidence in my style and a determination to keep experimenting.

Friends and family loved my new look, especially my mum, and told me I looked happy.

Since then, I've filled my wardrobe with everything from vintage cropped Levi's to a yellow ballgown from the 1980s, more modern pieces, such as a structured, designer green jacket that Regina gave me as a gift, and colourful bohemian sundresses.

I shop at places such as London's Portobello Market and in charity shops, and get such a thrill when I find something I love, and for a bargain price. I still shop on the high street and mix and match modern with vintage, but now I buy what I like, not what I'm told is on trend.

Changing my style and embracing a more edgy look has left me feeling more positive and empowered. Regina sadly died in 2021, aged just 58, and I dearly miss sending her photos of my new purchases and talking to her on the phone, but I think of her every time I have a spree at a vintage shop or spot a one-off piece online. Fashion was what brought us together and her legacy is my revamped style; I owe it to her and I'm so grateful she encouraged me to be bold and stand out. I think she'd be proud.
• *sophiaworld.co.uk*

Fashion brought Sophia and Regina together

'Changing my style has left me feeling positive and empowered'

Sophia wears Dress, Sophia's own. Earrings, Ashiana. Bracelets, both Rediscovered by Susan Caplan. Shoes, New Look
As told to Eimear O'Hagan **Photography** Liz McAulay **Styling** Helen Johnson **Styling assistant** Lucy Trievnor **Hair and makeup** Anna Durston, Jo McKenna

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Evening News
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Claire feels more positive about the future now

With celebrities such as Nadia Sawalha and Sue Perkins speaking out about being diagnosed with attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) later in life, more than a quarter of a million British women took an online test for ADHD in 2021 – an increase of more than 3,000% since 2019.

‘My diagnosis was like FINDING THE MISSING PIECE OF THE PUZZLE’

Mum of two Claire Campbell-Adams, 42, from Newport, explains why she's relieved to finally have a reason for the symptoms that have plagued her all her life

It seemed like every day there was something I'd forgotten about or got wrong. I would open the washing machine to load it up, only to realise the last load was still in there, damp. Or I'd take my kids, Noah, now 15, and Eden, 13, to school, only to realise today was the bake sale and I hadn't made them anything to take in.

These things happen to everyone from time to time, but for me, they were daily – or even hourly – occurrences. I thought I was a bad mum. I felt embarrassed that I couldn't do these seemingly simple things however much I tried and wanted to.

I resisted having friends over for fear they would judge my messy house. I didn't want to live like this, but I also didn't know what the solution was.

Looking back, I'd always been told off for daydreaming and not paying attention since primary school age, but my problems became more apparent at secondary school when I had to manage my own timetable

It can be hard to diagnose

Dr Joanne Steer, a consultant clinical psychologist, has seen a rise in the number of women seeking a diagnosis for ADHD, but explains it can be harder to spot in women and girls. 'Of the three types of ADHD – hyperactive, inattentive and combined – women more commonly have the inattentive type, which includes symptoms such as being easily distracted, organisational difficulty, forgetfulness and a lack of attention to detail,' she says. 'These can be harder for teachers and parents to spot, so many make it into adulthood undiagnosed. Thankfully, our knowledge and understanding of ADHD in females has improved dramatically, thanks in part to social media and celebrities speaking out about their own diagnoses. This has led to a surge in women coming forward for assessment.'

and navigate the teenage social scene. Organisation was a real sticking point for me, no matter how many diaries and calendars I bought, and I struggled socially for fear of rejection from others.

LIGHT BULB MOMENT

When I went to university to study psychology, I had to drop out in the second year because I struggled so much with the self-directed learning and long deadlines. My husband, Ed, whom I married in 2005, was supportive and accepting from the start, but I never felt truly present with Noah and Eden because my mind was always elsewhere, worrying I was forgetting something.

As my children became teenagers, I decided to go back to university to get my psychology degree. When Noah was diagnosed with dyslexia and autism aged 11, I realised I'd also always struggled with spelling and writing. I went for a test so I could access the right support within the university to avoid dropping out again. 'You do know you have ADHD, don't you?' the dyslexia specialist said. ADHD had never crossed my mind, but when I went home and researched the symptoms, suddenly everything made sense.

> 'I researched the symptoms and it all made sense'

It was like a light bulb switched on in my head, illuminating this part of me that I had never fully understood. When I told family and friends, everyone agreed it was like finding the missing piece of the puzzle; it finally made the way I think make sense.

With her dog, Hugsy

Words Georgia Green **Photography** Jesse Wild

Some people seek support from an ADHD coach, but I found ways to manage my symptoms through online research and advice from a friend who is doing a PhD on ADHD in women. Ed is so supportive and we're on a learning curve together.

I have a big whiteboard in the kitchen where I write up our appointments so I can see what's going on in the week. It's common for people with ADHD to be very deadline-driven, so I started creating self-imposed deadlines for everything.

SUPERPOWER

In November 2022, I was officially diagnosed with the combined type of ADHD, which means I present a selection of hyperactive and inattentive traits. People, including myself, often associate hyperactivity with being unable to sit still, but it can also manifest mentally; it's my mind that's hyperactive.

I'm a lot kinder to myself these days, now I know about my ADHD. I allow my brain to jump from task to task rather than fighting against the urge, and I no longer punish myself for being late – as that's caused by time blindness, a common trait that results in the inability to sense the passing of time or estimate how long a task will take. My brain is less cluttered and I can be more present with my kids, too.

I recognise that my ADHD brain is a superpower and that being able to see things from a different perspective is a good thing. In fact, because of this, I'm setting up my own coaching business to help other neurodiverse mums. I want to pass on my knowledge to other women who may be struggling and tell them they're not stupid or lazy; their brain just works differently and there are tools to help them work with, rather than against, their brain.

Now, when I think about the future, I feel positive – and that's down to me finally accepting myself.

@claire_campbelladams

- *Understanding ADHD In Girls & Women (Jessica Kingsley Publishers) edited by Joanne Steer is on sale now. drjosteer.com*

WORRIED YOU MAY HAVE ADHD?

'If you're concerned about yourself, a friend or family member, seek advice from your GP (for children, you can discuss it with their school or your GP),' says Dr Steer. 'A GP can make a referral to a local NHS team or a private assessment can be sought. For further research, adhdfoundation.org.uk is a great resource, while the podcast series *Is It My ADHD?* by Grace Timothy, which focuses on ADHD in women, is also a good listen.'

The little things that HELPED US THROUGH

Continuing our look at the very complex subject of grief, we share three women's stories that explain the different ways they found to help them cope

'I have learned that beauty is healing'

The loss of her son, Saagar, left DR SANGEETA MAHAJAN, 56, an anaesthetist from London, feeling devastated, until a childhood fascination became a path to peace.

In the autumn of 2014, my friend Pinky invited me to an exhibition of Ikebana, the art of Japanese flower arranging. It reminded me of a book my mother had and how, as a child, I'd never tired of turning its pages, admiring the exotic creations. At the exhibition, a serene, elegant beauty met my eyes. It made me feel peaceful and deeply connected with nature. I wanted to sign up for lessons but my darling son, Saagar, had been diagnosed with a serious illness, bipolar disorder, a few weeks before, so I decided to put it off until he got better.

But, six weeks later, I returned from work to find a piece of paper on the third step of my staircase. It read: *Sorry, I can't take this any more.* It was Saagar's handwriting but I didn't know where he was or how to find him. Then two kind policemen came to the door and told me the devastating news of his death. I had no idea how to deal with anything like this. My world blackened. I was exiled to an unsurvivable reality. It was filled with the absence of my Saagar – who loved making everyone laugh, spending time with his friends, playing the drums and fast bowling.

Saagar moved with me from India to the UK in 1999 for my work as a trainee anaesthetist, his dad and sister following soon after. While Saagar's sister returned to India to study, Saagar attended Dulwich College in London. His love of languages led him to take French and Arabic at Durham University but at the end of his second year, during the summer holidays, I'd noticed his atypical sleeping and eating habits. His confidence seemed to have soared. It was a confusing time – was this youthful enthusiasm, Saagar changing as a person or something else? Soon it became clear he needed medical attention, which he received. Unfortunately, it failed to keep him alive.

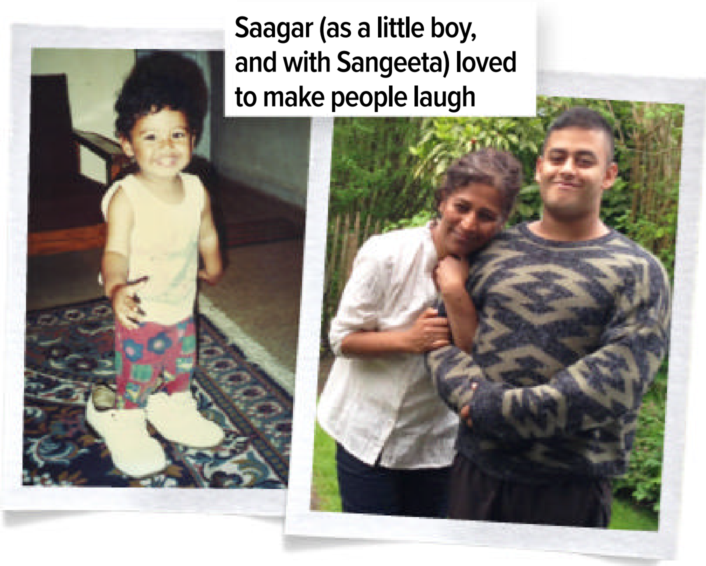
> 'I've found a way to keep him alive in my heart'

His sudden and traumatic death brought my life to a complete halt. I returned to India and, for months, I simply sat. It was like watching a film about somebody else's life. When I finally returned to the UK, I started the Ikebana lessons.

It's like meditating with nature. Wood symbolises mountains and grasses and flowers suggest water, creating a natural landscape in a single vase and welcoming the outdoors into your home. It was a much-needed break from the cacophony in my mind. I began to look forward to the lessons and reconnected with the quiet place in my heart that was open to receiving beauty and joy. I joined Pinky's circle of skilled flower-arrangers and realised Ikebana's simple healing power.

I'll miss my son as long as I live, but I have found a way to keep him alive in my heart as beauty and kindness.

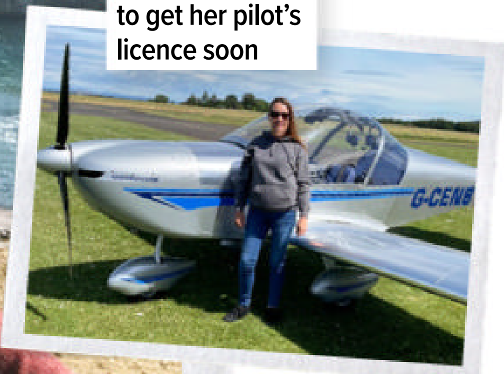
- *Sangeeta offers online peer support for bereaved parents at core-community.com. She is one of 13 contributors to a new book When Words Are Not Enough: Creative Responses To Grief (Quickthorn Books) by Jane Harris and Jimmy Edmonds, founders of The Good Grief Project. Visit thegoodgriefproject.co.uk*



Saagar (as a little boy, and with Sangeeta) loved to make people laugh

Ikebana's serene beauty is calming

The couple shared a sense of adventure



Amanda hopes to get her pilot's licence soon

'I took to the skies in his memory'

AMANDA RUTHERFORD, 50, who works for a homeless charity and lives in Dalkeith, Midlothian, found an inspiring way to channel her grief.

Up in the clouds, I can forget the pain and loneliness. My wonderful husband, Davie, was my sounding board, travel buddy and best friend – and he died aged 59 of pancreatic cancer.

We'd met at work at a homeless charity. He was easygoing, with a brilliant sense of humour. We loved travelling and I always joked that I'd learn to fly a plane and, one day, on a flight he'd hear me say: 'This is your captain speaking.' We had so many plans for our future, so many places we wanted to see, and it was all taken away.

My grief was a complex, shifting range of emotions. I'd find myself counting the days and weeks since I'd last seen Davie. He died in January 2022 on a Saturday at 3pm, and every Saturday at the same time I'd go and sit by his grave. I felt I couldn't leave, which I knew wasn't healthy. I needed to channel my grief into something positive – but what?

Then, a few months later, I was going through some paperwork and I found a voucher for a flying lesson. It had been Davie's last gift to me and I'd forgotten about it in the heartbreak over his death. In that moment, I'd found my answer. I booked a lesson on what would have been Davie's birthday in July. In the morning, I took flowers to his grave, and that afternoon I nervously climbed into the tiny two-seater plane with my instructor, George.

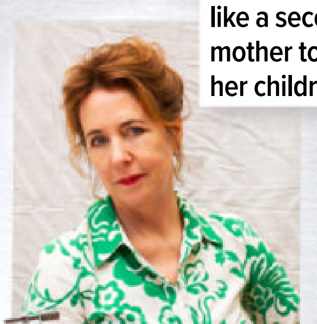
Instead of crying in a cemetery at 3pm, I was up in the clouds for an hour, feeling liberated. As soon as we landed, I wanted to get back up there and I soon signed up for more lessons. I now spend nearly every weekend flying and I'm working towards getting my pilot's licence.

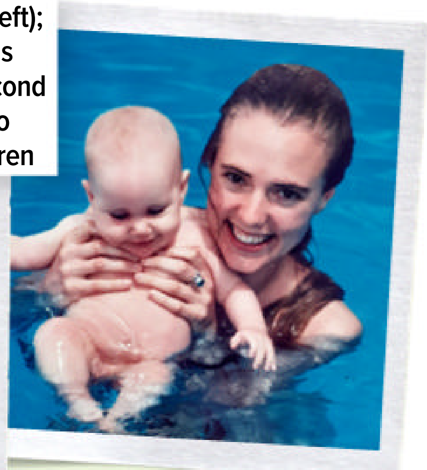
I miss Davie every moment of every day. Flying doesn't ease the pain, but it's an outlet, which is so important for anyone navigating grief. And I'll carry Davie in my heart on every adventure.

- *Visit widowedandyoung.org.uk*

'I stitched myself back together'

Margie Orford, 58, from London, found using her hands healed her.





Margie (left); Melle was like a second mother to her children

My little sister, Penelope Jane – who I called Melle – and I loved to draw together. Growing up in Namibia, our mother made mosaics and had an ottoman full of pens, papers and paints – a treasure trove of creativity. Even from a young age, it was a form of self-expression.

Though I moved around a lot and lived in many different countries, Melle and I stayed close. I married, and by the time I'd had all three of my children, I was living in Namibia again. Melle was like a second mother to them. She had this wild streak that they loved and she would often take them on adventures.

After my divorce, I moved back to London, and in November 2021, my mother rang me and told me that Melle had suffered a bleed on the brain. Frantic to be by her side, I boarded the next flight.

When I finally got to the hospital, Melle was slipping into a coma. I sat by her bed and felt so powerless. In the end, I began knitting. I wasn't knitting anything particular, but this thing got longer and longer.

A few days later, the doctors told us that the machines keeping Melle alive had to be switched off. Her husband and I held her hands as she died. She was just 55. It was like I had been ripped apart. When I returned to London, desperate for a distraction from my grief, I embroidered a tapestry that said 'Sister Love'. It felt like I was embroidering around the jagged edges of a hole Melle had left. Slowly, I was stitching myself back together.

Sister
Love

I have since made a number of tapestries – the process painful each time and yet also cathartic. The physical nature of making something new is like a shoot of life through the sadness. It's a way of looking outside yourself and finding beauty in the world again.

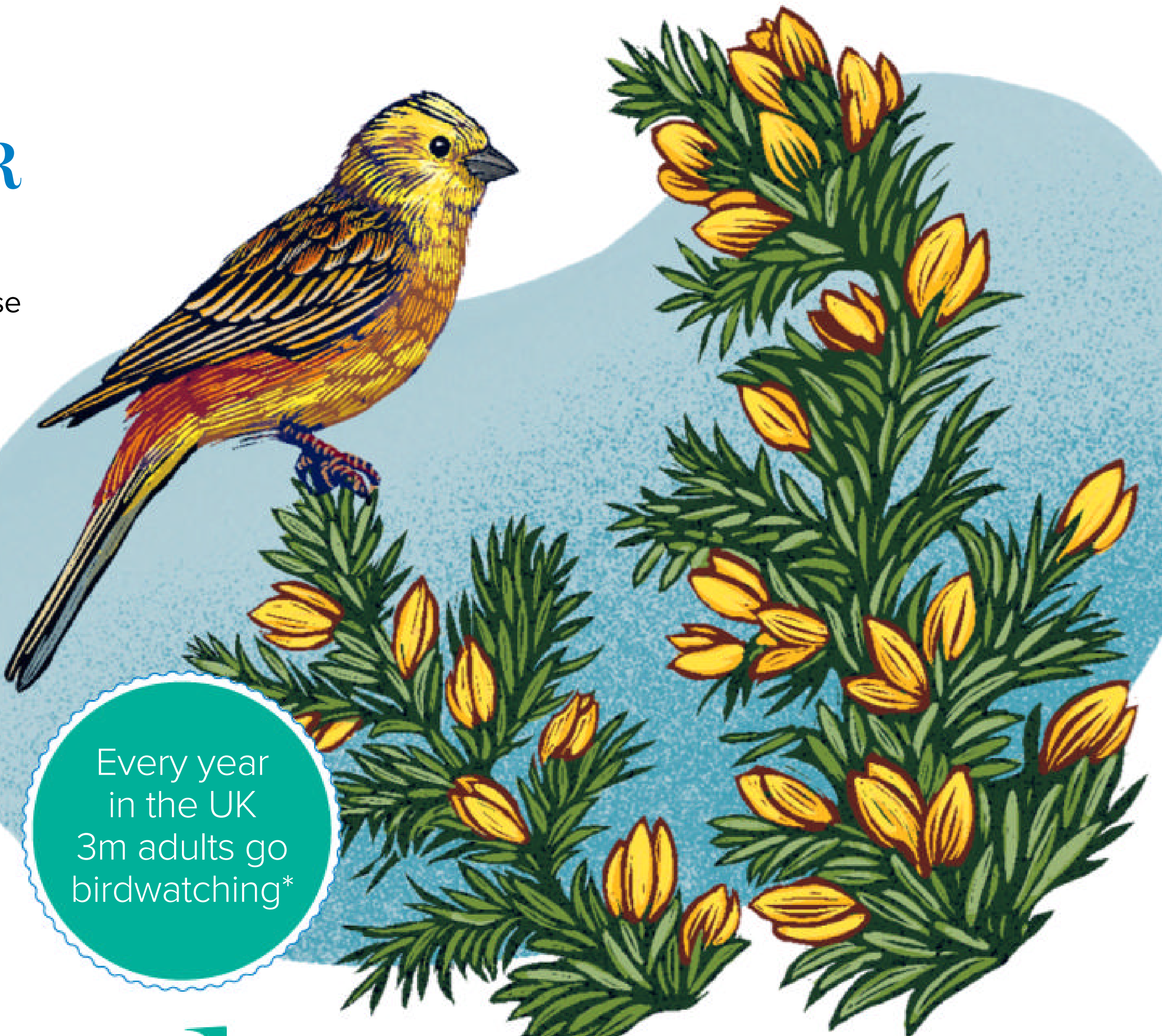
- *The Eye Of The Beholder (Canongate Books) by Margie Orford is out now*

As told to Ella Dove and Bryony Gooch

YELLOWHAMMER

Sitting atop a gorse bush on a summer's day, a yellowhammer repeats its call with untiring regularity: a short, bubbling phrase that the children's author Enid Blyton interpreted as 'A little bit of bread and no cheese!' in her poems and stories. The male yellowhammer has shades of brown giving way to pure buttercup yellow on its head and throat.

FOLKLORE: **A yellowhammer's eggs look like fine porcelain that has had melted chocolate dribbled over the surface. To early observers, these markings resembled pen-and-ink scribbles, and the bird was called a 'writing lark' or 'writing master'.**



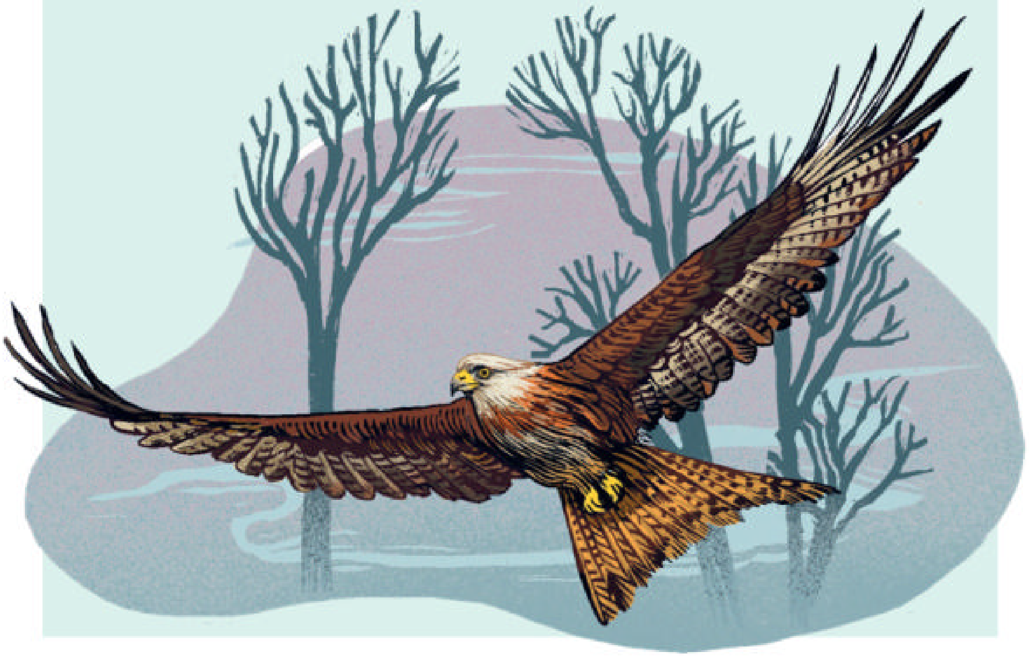
Every year in the UK 3m adults go birdwatching*

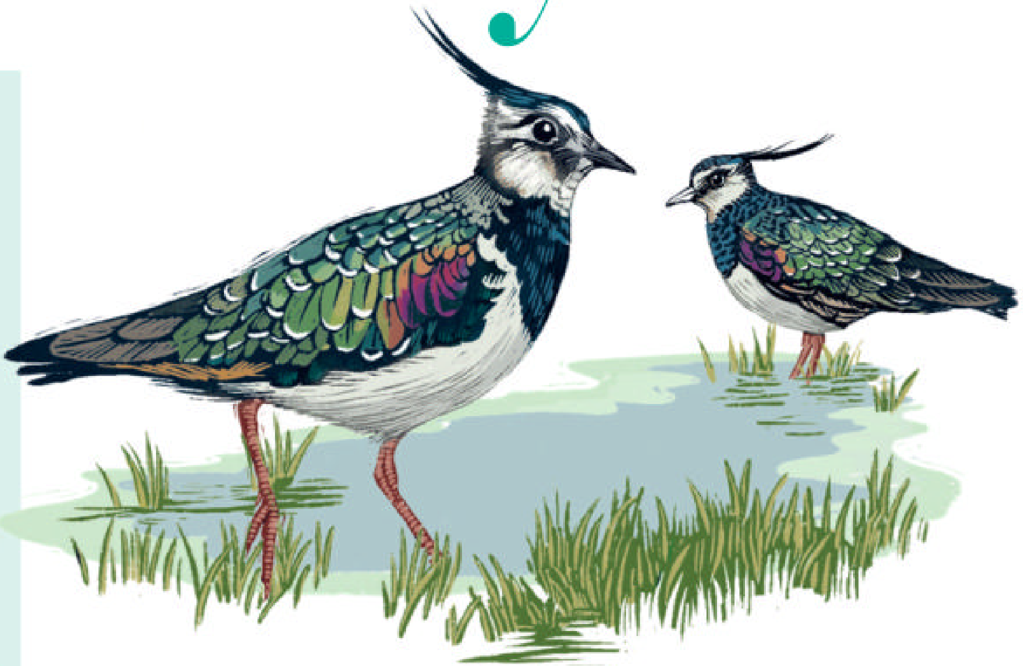
Do you know your

RED KITE

With its deeply forked tail and rich reddish-brown plumage, the red kite was once so persecuted in Britain that its population fell to just a handful of birds. In the late 1960s the kites' exact whereabouts in the valleys of Mid Wales was kept secret to protect them. They have since returned to much of Wales, as well as parts of England, Scotland and Ireland. Kites love to nest in oak woodland, but in medieval times were common in towns, scavenging scraps and even stealing food from people.

FOLKLORE: **In Shakespeare's plays, kites often appear as an object of evil omen or ill repute.**





LAPWING

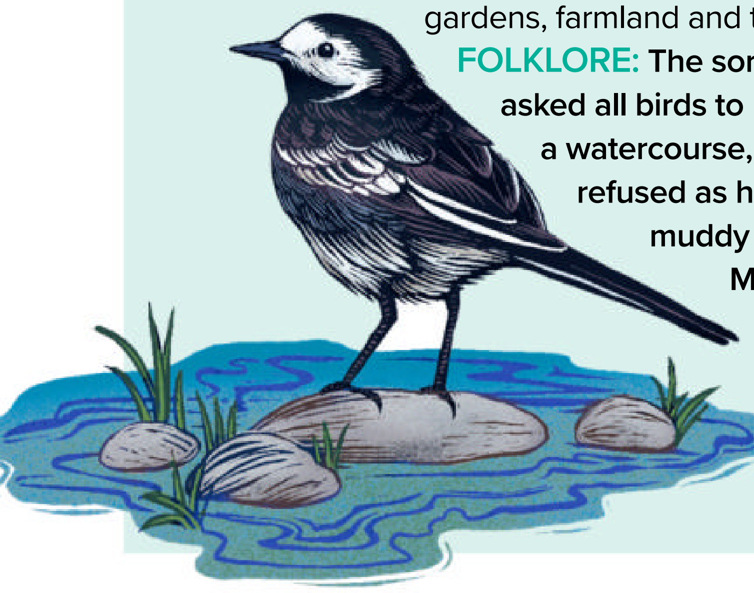
A bird of the moorlands, salt marshes and coastal fringes, the lapwing is a ground-nesting species, meaning that its eggs and young are particularly vulnerable to disturbance. In recent decades, numbers have declined in Britain, a trend blamed partly on changes in farming practices. If you do see one up close, look out for its long crest and back feathers that shine iridescent green and purple.

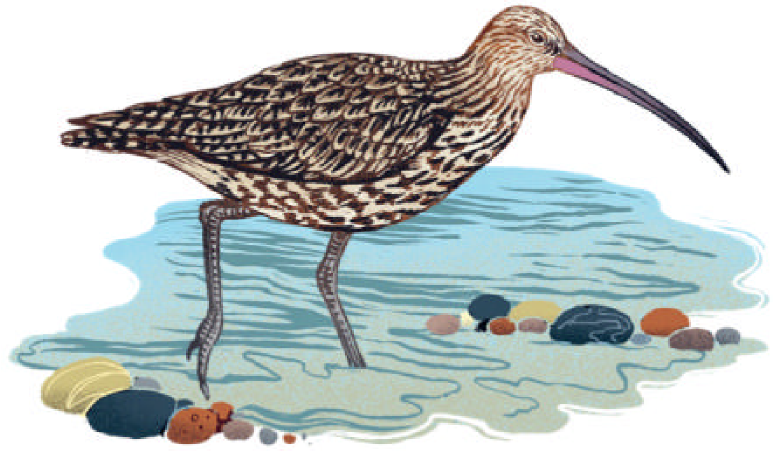
FOLKLORE: **The lapwing has an undeserved reputation for sneaky and fraudulent behaviour, as when a pair of nesting lapwings are surprised, the female may run along the ground and feign injury, dragging or flapping her wings to lure a predator away from the nest.**

WAGTAILS

Britain's three resident species of wagtail – pied (pictured), grey and yellow – are delightful to watch, with their long tails constantly bobbing as they run along the ground or flit from rock to rock amid a fast-flowing stream. Once called 'water wagtails' for frequenting riverbanks, seashores, lakes and wet meadows, they're now seen in gardens, farmland and town centres.

FOLKLORE: **The sorcerer Merlin asked all birds to help him dig a watercourse, but the wagtail refused as he did not wish to muddy his white legs. Merlin punished him by turning his legs black, and for ever after he was made to drink from puddles.**





CURLEW

The largest European wading bird, the curlew's most-recognisable features are an elongated, down-curved bill and long legs. They can be found on estuaries and mudflats in winter, where they probe for earthworms and insects in the soft ground. In spring, they move to moorland and upland pastures, uttering their joyous bubbling song and creating aerial displays above their nest sites.

FOLKLORE: **In Ireland, a curlew crying repeatedly was said to be a sign of rain.**

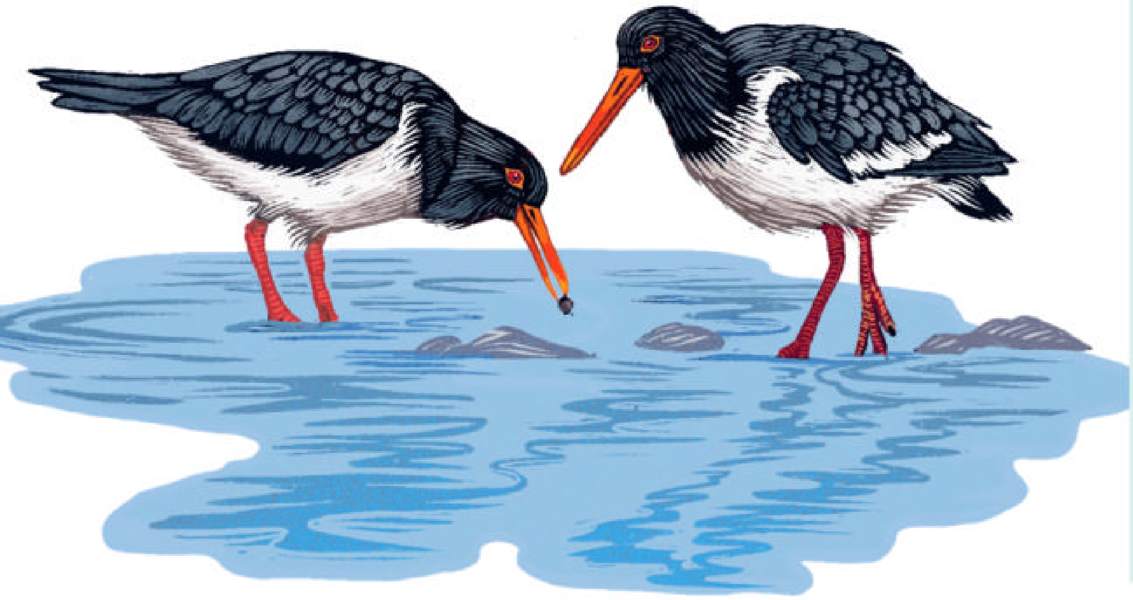
BIRDS?

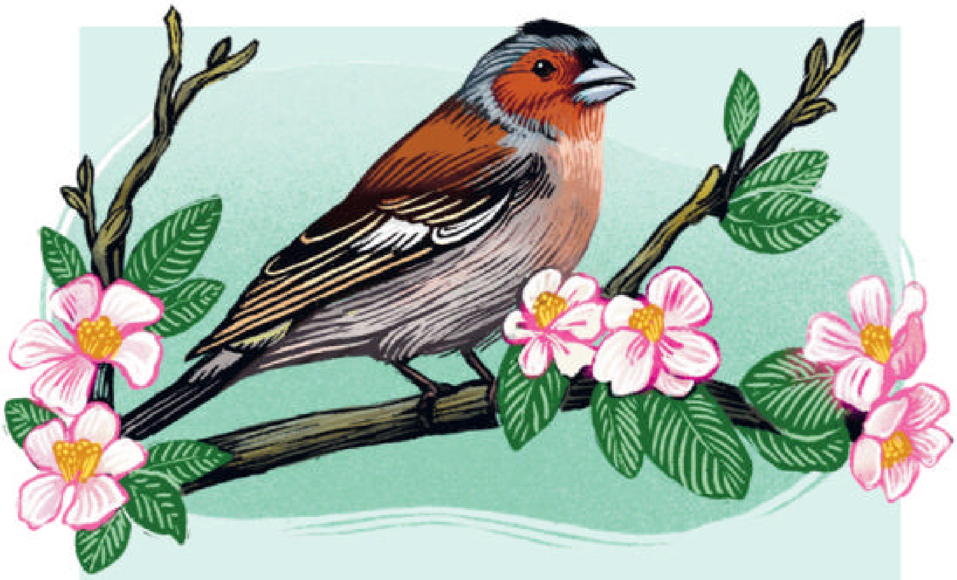
It's a great time of year to spot our feathered friends, and Jo Woolf's charming book, *Britain's Birds*, helps to identify them

OYSTERCATCHER

Black and white, with a vivid orange-red bill and pink feet, oystercatchers are drawn to wide expanses of tidal mudflats, such as Lancashire's Morecambe Bay. As breeding time during the summer season approaches and rivalry becomes intense, small groups can be seen running in a frenzied manner along the shore. A single bird can devour 500 cockles in a day.

FOLKLORE: **An Irish folk tale tells how the oystercatcher was originally able to swim, while gulls couldn't. A gull borrowed an oystercatcher's webbed feet and never gave them back, hence the oystercatcher was left wading along the tide's edge for evermore.**

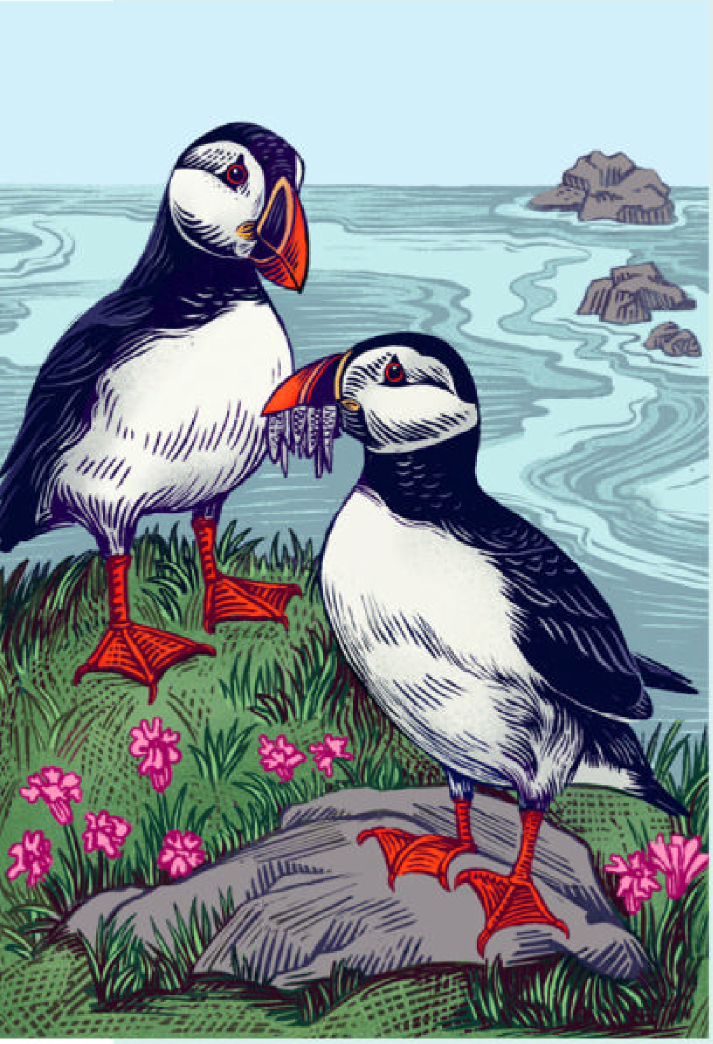




CHAFFINCH

The chaffinch is one of the most common bird species in the UK, and it's very widespread. The small birds are frequently found in woodland, but you're also likely to spot them in parks and gardens. Dainty and often brilliantly coloured, all finches have long been admired for their beauty, which is even more striking when the birds are seen in a flock, their feathers flashing a rainbow of hues from raspberry pink and vivid scarlet, right through to the purest golden yellow and lime green.

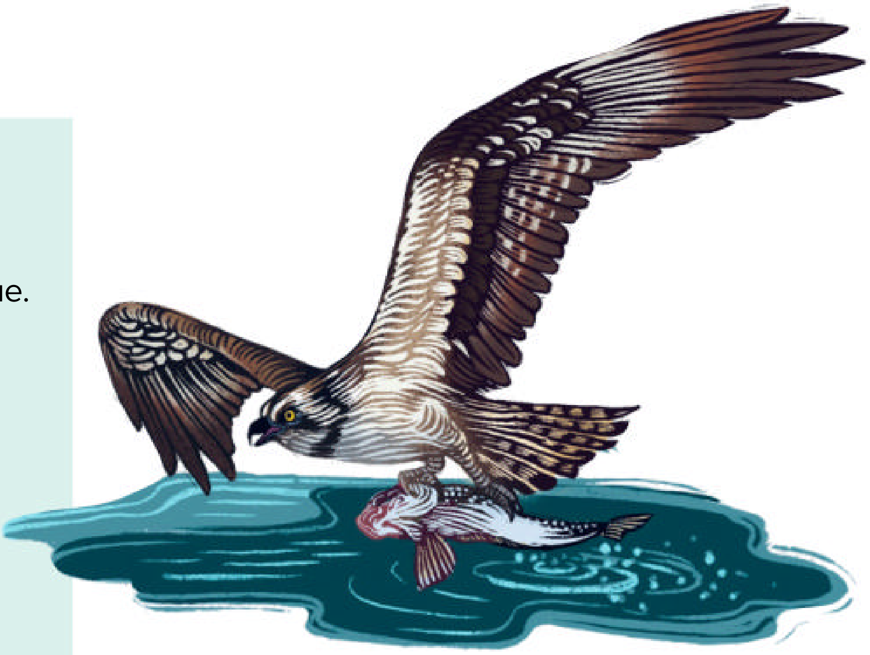
FOLKLORE: **In Native American traditions, finches are associated with joy and celebration.** ➔



PUFFIN

The puffin's bill is brightly striped in red, yellow and blue. In winter, however, the 'sea parrots' shed their colourful bill-plates and lose their clown-like eye markings. Puffins spend the winter at sea and the summer nesting on coastal islands; an estimated 580,000 pairs of Atlantic puffins nest around Britain's coast, often returning to the same burrow and reuniting with the same mate.

FOLKLORE: Some native Alaskan tribes believed that puffins had the power to change weather patterns and ward off storms.



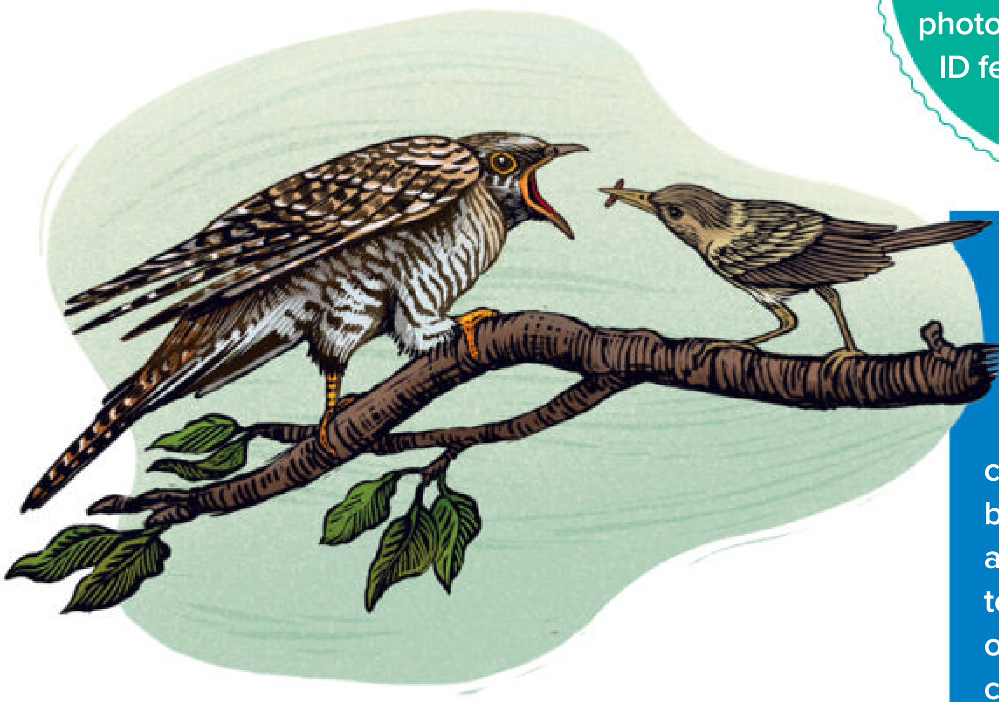
OSPREY

These massive, fish-eating birds are summer visitors, winging their way here from West Africa to breed and raise their young in tree-top nests. Their favoured sites are mostly in Scotland, but a few have also bred in England and Wales. From below, ospreys' wings are mostly white with a prominent dark patch at the wrists (the bend in the middle of the wing). The full wingspan of an adult osprey is around 5ft, with females being around 20% larger than males.

FOLKLORE: It was once believed that ospreys could charm fish so that they offered themselves willingly as prey!

App-head

The Merlin Bird ID app identifies birds via a series of questions, or upload a photo instead. Its Sound ID feature recognises birds' calls.



CUCKOO

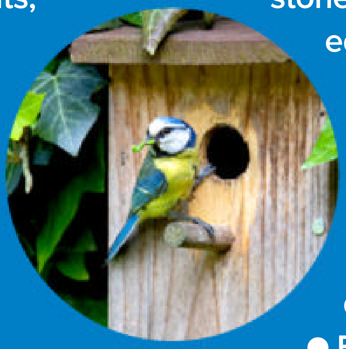
After wintering in Africa, cuckoos arrive in Britain around April, settling into farmland, heaths and woodland edges. With lowered wings, an upturned tail and bright orange-yellow eyes, the cuckoo brings with it the welcome sound of summer. The male's call is the most familiar, while the female's is a long, bubbling note that has been compared to the sound of water being emptied from a bottle.

FOLKLORE: In the Hebrides, it was bad news if the first cuckoo sang when you were hungry. To be safe, people would slip a piece of bread under their pillows at night and eat it on waking.

• *Britain's Birds: A Treasury Of Fact, Fiction & Folklore (National Trust Books) by Jo Woolf is out now; nationaltrust.org.uk/books*

Make your garden bird-friendly*

- Place feeders somewhere with a 360° view of your garden, yet close to a small bush, too, so birds can scan for predators and also have somewhere to retreat to. Avoid leaving out salt, milk, dried coconut, cooked porridge oats, cooking fats and margarines.
- Provide natural food: bushes with berries, long grass containing invertebrates, wildflower patches, bug hotels and plants labelled as wildlife-friendly are all good places to start.
- Water is just as important as food for a wildlife-friendly garden. Birds need water to stay hydrated, keep clean and cool off (they can't sweat, so bathing is one of their only ways to stay cool in hot weather). Try putting out some water in a plant pot saucer or inverting a bin lid and filling it with water. Just make sure to put some stones around the edge for support and in the bottom for easy access; clean it weekly to prevent the transfer of diseases.



- Birds need places to nest that are protected from the elements. Any shelters you put up, such as a bird box, should face somewhere between north and east to avoid too much sun, wind or rain.

Compiled by Bella Evennett-Watts **Photography** Getty **Illustrations** *Britain's Birds: A Treasury Of Fact, Fiction & Folklore* *Source and tips: RSPB

'I saw my hats ON TV!'

When health and safety officer Vanessa Brett, 53, found herself at a loose end during lockdown, she decided to get creative

Tears fell down my face as the car drove away. My younger daughter, Mollie, 23, was leaving home for a new job and, while I was happy for her, I knew I'd miss her. Her sister, Megan, 26, had already left home and was engaged. 'Just the two of us now,' my husband Jonathan said, putting his arm round me.

It was May 2020, and the pandemic had also thrown my own life into upheaval. I'd spent 30 years working in food safety and health and safety. From inspecting restaurant kitchens to helping in the homes of hoarders, I loved my job, but my work contracts had dried up in lockdown.

Stuck at home and with the girls gone, I thought about how to fill my time. I loved crafts; with Megan's wedding on the horizon, I wondered if it was a good time to get creative again.

Kitting out the now-spare room with my sewing machine and materials, I decided to have a go at hat-making. At previous weddings, I'd added my own trim to shop-bought hats to make them unique. I thought it would be a fun challenge to make my own mother-of-the-bride hat.

I found YouTube tutorials by milliner Elena Shvab. Carefully following the steps, I slowly crafted a fascinator. It wasn't perfect, but I was delighted with the result. It was woven with small fabric flowers.

A few months later, I had three days of intensive tutoring with Elena in her London studio. I'd caught the millinery bug. I bought blocks to shape hats, tried different styles and joined The British Millinery Association.

My friends loved my hats so I decided to try selling a few items locally and on Etsy. It was no more than a hobby, but each sale gave me a rush of joy.

Have you taken on a new challenge? Email us at prima@hearst.co.uk to let us know

One day, Jonathan mentioned he'd heard DJ Chris Moyles talking about listeners' lockdown ventures on the radio. 'You should send him one of your fascinators,' he said. 'You have a real talent!' My hat ended up being talked about live on air! I then sent one to ITV's *This Morning* – I couldn't believe it when I saw a model wearing it on Lisa Snowdon's segment!

I enrolled on further tutoring with Ian Bennett, who created hats for the late Queen. And last January, I made the leap, rented a studio near our home in Writtle, Essex, and launched my own business.

I see clients by appointment, and also offer a sustainable hire option for occasion headpieces. Often, I'll help women choose what to wear for their children's weddings. I love knowing I've contributed in some small way. Last year, I won New Wedding Business of the Year at the Essex Wedding Awards.

'I'm proof you should pursue your passion'

Vanessa wore her own bespoke headpiece at her daughter's wedding

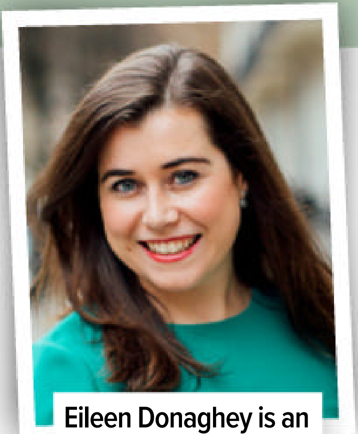
It's all been a whirlwind, but the most magical moment was Megan's wedding last summer. I made a bespoke piece in pink and ivory, with delicate feather leaves and flowers. Word had got round – there were 12 people there wearing my designs!

I'm proof you should pursue your passion – what do you have to lose? • *vanessabrettmillinery.com*

As told to Bella Evennett-Watts **Photography** Winston Sanders, Carolyn Clarke

Time for TEA!

To celebrate National Tea Day on 21 April, we take a look at the etiquette and history behind the nation’s favourite drink



Eileen Donaghey is an afternoon tea expert

Britons drink around 100m cuppas a day! That’s nearly 36bn per year. It’s been our favourite beverage for hundreds of years and is still rising in popularity, with iced teas and tea-flavoured cocktails predicted to boom this year. ‘Tourists come from around the world to find out about our tea-drinking culture,’ says afternoon tea expert Eileen Donaghey (afternoonteaexpert.co.uk), who runs conferences and afternoon tea events at the JW Marriott Grosvenor House London. ‘There’s a real fascination about our love affair with tea and the etiquette that goes with it.

‘We all have our own view on how to make the perfect cuppa,’ adds Eileen, but she is adamant about one thing: always pour the tea first to see how strongly it has been brewed – then add milk. In fact, she says: ‘We’re one of the few nations to add milk to our tea. The tradition started because King Charles II’s Portuguese wife brought tea over as part of her dowry in the 1650s and it became popular, but it was so bitter it had to be taken with cream, sugar or milk. These days, we still add milk to our tea even though we don’t need to. I usually add a drop of almond milk to mine, but you should never add milk to Darjeeling – and sugar ruins the taste.’

Keeping calm

Tea contains the amino acid L-theanine, which is proven to reduce mental and physical stress. Combined with caffeine, which is also present in tea, it helps to speed up brain reaction time and is also thought to strengthen the immune system.

Although Eileen reveals that around 92% of our tea today is made using teabags, she’s not a fan. ‘Loose leaf is far superior to tea bags as it’s handpicked and you get the pure tea leaves,’ she says. ‘The tea used in bags is made by a machine that cuts the plants alongside twigs and branches. If you buy a box of teabags and it’s dusty inside, you can tell it’s poor quality.’

UK Tea Academy director of studies Jane Pettigrew says that by using a pot rather than simply dunking a tea bag in a mug, you can get even more benefits. ‘Brewing tea in the traditional style creates a few calm moments during a busy day,’ she says. ‘Choosing the tea, teapot and cup or bowl is all part of the enjoyment. The ritual of tea has powerful links to Zen Buddhism, and the act of brewing distracts us from work and worries. It teaches us to value and recognise the importance of the small things in life.’

THE GREAT SCONE DEBATE

Who would have thought a floury cake could be so contentious? Just how do you pronounce it and what comes first: jam or cream? 'The pronunciation is definitely with a short "o" as in "gone", rather than "bone",' says Eileen. And unless you're taking your scone in Devon or Cornwall (cream first in Devon, jam first in Cornwall), it's a matter of personal preference.

If you're unsure, Eileen offers this suggestion: 'I was invited to a garden party at Buckingham Palace and the scones came preprepared. The cream was first with the jam on top. So if it was good enough for the late Queen...'

If you're taking afternoon tea out, 'Never use your knife to cut the scone,' Eileen advises. 'Instead, use your fingers to break it into two halves – and never eat it like a hamburger!'

Tea-potted history

'There are very few countries where tea isn't drunk,' says Jane, 'but we don't drink as much coffee as other Europeans, so that may be why we're viewed as the number-one tea-drinking nation.'

The Dutch were the first Europeans to bring tea home from China. They then exported it to London in the 1650s. Only the upper classes could afford to drink tea at the time, but by the 18th century when different qualities and cheaper options were introduced, tea was being drunk by the lower classes. Some benevolent employers made tea available for the workers and provided milk, sugar and a place to take a break (perhaps the origin of the famous UK tea break, now written into work contracts). In the second half of the 19th century, the price of tea had dropped so much that it became the most popular British working-class drink.

AFTERNOON TEA

While the late Queen's Jubilee last year gave the tradition of going out for afternoon tea a boost, choosing the right one is very important, says Eileen.

'It's nearly always a special occasion, so you want somewhere that has a relaxed vibe; you definitely don't want to feel rushed,' she says. 'It's nice to dress up. In fact, some hotels insist on collars and ties for men and no trainers, so do check beforehand.'

The course order is important, Eileen adds: 'Sandwiches first, scones second and then cakes,' she says.

If you're tempted to stick out your pinky finger when drinking your tea, don't! 'It's a breach of etiquette,' she says firmly. 'One theory is that in the past, the upper classes thought servants who'd prepared food were dirty and so used as few fingers as possible to touch their food.'

Eileen's modern-day etiquette advice includes leaving the saucer on the table when you drink and replacing the cup in the saucer with the handle at three o'clock. 'Don't expect unlimited refills or a doggy bag to take home,' she says. 'Some venues offer this, but not all.'

5 of the best places for AFTERNOON TEA

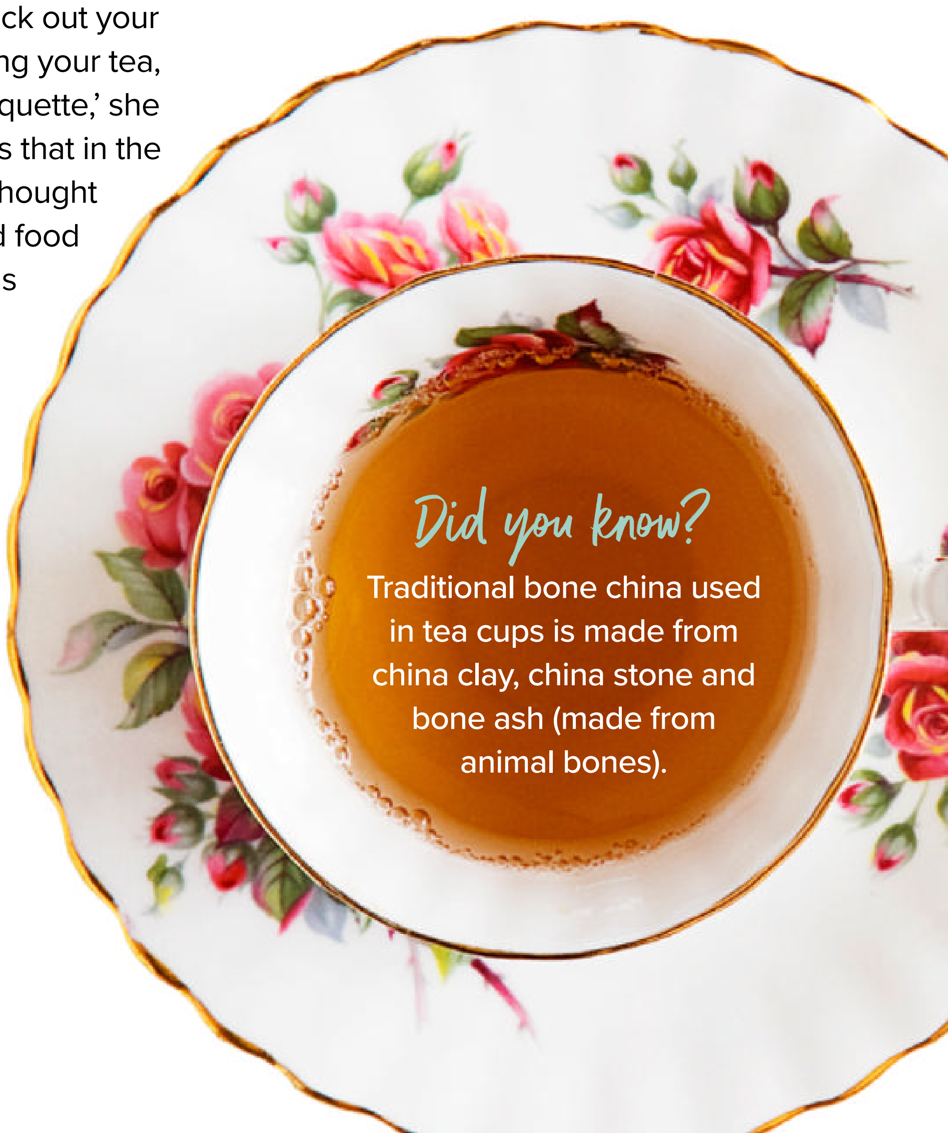
1. **Orange Pekoe, Barnes, London**
2. **Eteaket, Edinburgh**
3. **The Rosebery at the Mandarin Oriental Hyde Park, London**
4. **Any of the six Bettys Café Tea Rooms in Yorkshire**
5. **Carriages of Cambridge, Fen Drayton**

As chosen by Jane Pettigrew

BECOME A TEA SOMMELIER

Take a course at The UK Tea Academy and you can even become a tea sommelier – much like a qualified wine expert. You'll gain in-depth knowledge of tea growing and learn how to identify and describe flavours, tasting hundreds of teas from around the world.

Or try a masterclass, which includes tea processing, blending, herbs and infusion, history and etiquette. From £250, ukteaacademy.co.uk.



Did you know?

Traditional bone china used in tea cups is made from china clay, china stone and bone ash (made from animal bones).

Words Sandra Walsh **Photography** Getty, Brent Darby

And the winner is…

CRIME SCENE - DO NOT CR
E SCENE - DO NOT C

Prima's CRIME WRITING SPECIAL

ove a mystery? Always know whodunnit? Itching to vrite your own crime fiction? Then prepare for thrills! The following pages are jam-packed with all things thriller, from fascinating facts about the queen of crime Agatha Christie to a very special short story competition judged by bestselling author Lisa Jewell. It's so good, it's criminal!

CAN YOU WRITE A thriller?

e've teamed up with top crime author sa Jewell to launch our own short story mpetition. Here's how to get involved…

WIN! You could win a bundle of signed books by Lisa Jewell, including her new thriller *The Family Remains*, £100 cash and the chance to see your story in a future issue of *Prima Plus*. Five runners-up will win signed copies of *The Family Remains*.

HOW IT WORKS

THE OPENING…

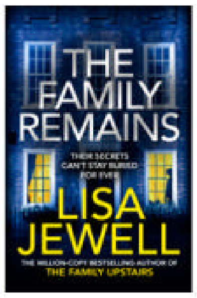
LISA'S TOP TIPS

TO ENTER, SIMPLY GO TO PRIMA.CO.UK/SHORTSTORYCOMP22

Entries for our thriller short story competition have now been judged by *Prima* editor Jo Checkley and top crime author Lisa Jewell – and the results are in

Top crime author Lisa Jewell and *Prima* editor Jo Checkley have had a very busy but enjoyable time reading all your fabulous thriller stories. Entries flooded in after we launched our competition last year asking you to write a 2,000-word twisty, pacy crime or thriller short story. Lisa Jewell wrote the opening scenario, and then it was over to you to take the story wherever you wanted.

Firstly, we're delighted to announce our five runners-up, who each win a signed copy of Lisa Jewell's new thriller, *The Family Remains*. They are: **Susan Martin** from Port Talbot, **Janet Duignan** from Alton, Hampshire, **Sue Gammon** from Bristol, **Christina Dartnell** from Tenterden, Kent **and Karen Walker** from Swindon. A huge well done to each of those five, whose entries were of the highest standard. Now, with great delight, we reveal our overall winner…


THE FAMILY REMAINS
THEIR SECRETS CAN'T STAY BURIED FOR EVER
LISA JEWELL
THE MILLION-COPY BESTSELLING AUTHOR OF THE FAMILY UPSTAIRS

THE WINNER

Lindy Cuell from Ottershaw, Surrey. Here, Lindy, 65, who runs a dog boutique called Saffy&Co, explains how it feels to be *Prima*'s winner…

Lindy says: 'Getting the call from *Prima* editor Jo to tell me I'd won was such a wonderful surprise! I've been jotting down ideas for many years, but I always lost confidence or convinced myself it wasn't going to work and then stopped. I'd never written a short story before, but this competition gave me the boost I needed to try.

'I love crime dramas and I spend a lot of time thinking up possible stories. Limited to just 2,000 words, I knew I had to pick a simple idea that I could dive straight into, so I settled on a "family secret" plot. Agatha Christie is my ultimate crime heroine – I love the way she puts plots together. My favourite reads are those that aren't too graphic or gory – I like a bit of imagination.

'I'm so over the moon to have won and I'm going to keep writing. I have so many ideas that I've never had the confidence to persevere with, but I've decided I'm going to have a go at writing a book.'

LINDY WINS A BUNDLE OF SIGNED LISA JEWELL BOOKS AND £100!

Now read Lindy's winning story – with the opening paragraph written by Lisa Jewell and given as the starting point of the story.

House of memories

BY LINDY CUELL

Martha was halfway between London and Bath when her satnav suddenly offered to reroute her; an incident on the motorway ahead was causing delays of up to an hour. Soon driving down tight country lanes in the depths of the Wiltshire countryside, the May sun dappling through the tall trees, thick clouds of cow parsley brushing the sides of the car as she passed. She couldn't believe that this route would possibly ever get her back on to a proper road and was beginning to feel a little anxious when she saw it. A small turning. A blue wooden sign with 'Moss Cottage' painted on it. A short gravelled drive, then a pale stone, wisteria-covered cottage behind a small weeping willow. Martha's heart stopped beating and she pressed hard on her brakes. She stared at the cottage and felt the shock of recognition flood through her. She had been here before.

For a moment she sat paralysed, staring, before a sick feeling in the pit of her stomach roused her and, without checking her mirrors, she reversed at speed. Rolling to a stop, her knuckles white as she clutched the steering wheel, she ducked her head to stare up through the windscreen at the front of the house.

Somewhere in the distance she vaguely noticed the sound of a tractor, but here in this pretty garden it was eerily quiet. Why did this place seem so familiar and why did that feeling seem so disturbing? She could feel threads of memory floating tantalisingly just out of reach, shadows glimpsed out of the corner of her eye, which, when she looked, disappeared, leaving only the faintest of ripples behind. Steeling herself, she stepped out. She could feel a tight knot in her stomach; a mixture of excitement and fear. This was ridiculous. Could it be that the cottage simply reminded her of somewhere or that she recognised it from some article in the papers? Brow furrowed, she didn't realise that while she had been staring, the front door had opened and a tall, middle-aged woman now stood regarding her silently, dark eyes guarded.

Martha started, 'Oh, I'm sorry, um...' Normally extremely articulate, she suddenly found herself at a total loss for words, flustered by the hostility she could feel emanating from the motionless figure.

She tried again. 'I'm really sorry to disturb you, but I was passing – I'm actually on my way to Bath – and I caught sight of your beautiful cottage and I feel as if I've been here before, as if I know it. But for the life of me, I can't remember when that would have been! Have you lived here long?'

The silence seemed interminable to Martha, who felt herself alternately reddening with embarrassment and feeling sick with anxiety. Oh no, now she needed the loo! This seriously could not be happening. Why on earth didn't this strange woman say anything? It was just plain rude!

'This is private property.' The statement was abrupt and harsh. 'You're not welcome here. Leave now or I'll call the police.'

'Who is it, Mrs Carey?' A light, cheerful voice suddenly interrupted and a face framed by dark, wispy curls suddenly materialised behind the still figure. 'Oh hello, are you lost?'

Startled as much by the smile and friendliness as the sudden appearance, Martha stepped back, her irritation of a moment ago already dissipating.

'It's no one, and they were just leaving!' An almost desperate note had crept into the angry exchange and an arm gripped the door, preventing the young woman from stepping forward.

'Sorry, I didn't mean to make you jump.' The girl glanced sideways in puzzlement at the figure blocking her exit and then turned back to address Martha.

'No, you didn't – I mean, you did, but it's fine. No, I'm not lost exactly, although I didn't think I knew this area at all. My satnav redirected me. I'm on my way to Bath, but I saw your beautiful cottage and for some inexplicable reason it drew me in and I feel like I've been here before, but for the life of me I can't think how, why or when?'

'How peculiar!' said the girl, ducking under the rigid arm and grinning, 'I love a mystery. Sorry about Mrs Carey – she has a heart of gold really, but doesn't like surprises and is not particularly fond of people. Apart from that, she's a sweetheart.' She laughed. It was infectious and after a moment Martha found herself joining in.

'This must seem so odd to you. I promise you ➜

I've never done this before and don't make a habit of pitching up at people's houses pretending to have been there before.'

'No, no it's fine. Look, why don't you come in, have a cup of tea and I'll show you around? You can meet my grandmother – she knows far more about the house and area than I do.' The instant Martha stepped through the door it gripped her; an overwhelming sense of déjà vu. She shook her head. This was starting to give her the creeps.

Suddenly, the girl in front of her stopped and, turning anxiously, she asked, 'You're not a journalist, are you?'

'A journalist?' Martha asked bewildered, 'Why would I be a journalist?'

There was a silence while the girl studied her face. Then, as if satisfied, but without answering, she smiled and continued through a doorway into a bright, sun-filled kitchen. 'I'm sorry, but over the years we've had a lot of gawkers and journalists hovering around,' she explained.

Martha had stopped listening. Tears seemed to be blurring her vision and the soft voice of the girl seemed to be coming from a long way off.

'Gran, this is... I'm sorry, I don't even know your name?' The girl turned questioningly.

'It's Martha,' but the words were an effort – all her focus was on the view visible through the open door and window, a view that she knew without doubt she had seen before.

The most wonderful euphoria engulfed her. Golden light, haloing a tree heavy with blossom, the buzz of insects and excited twittering of birds faint in the warm scented air.

'Martha, Martha... are you okay? Oh goodness, she's awfully pale. Give the girl some room, she'll be fine – she's just fainted. Probably hasn't had a square meal for days. Skin and bone, you young girls, all the same...'

Martha felt brusque hands moving her and reluctantly opened her eyes. Three pairs of eyes surveyed her from above and she realised that she was lying on the floor. Could she be any more embarrassing?

'I'm so sorry.'

She allowed the surly housekeeper to help her to a chair and gratefully accepted the strong coffee thrust into her hands. 'Shall we try that again?' said a kind, slightly rueful voice from the chair opposite.

'How do you know that? That swing fell apart years ago'

Flustered, Martha looked up, 'I'm so sorry...' she began again, but a hand was held up to stop her and then extended.

'No apologies necessary. I'm Sarah, Bella's grandmother, and I believe you've already met Mrs Carey?' There was definite amusement in her eyes now – she was obviously aware of what had transpired earlier.

'Martha was passing and saw the cottage, Gran, and thinks she's been here before although she can't remember when, so I said you were the one to ask.'

Bella was babbling now, as if she was worried that she had done something wrong. Mrs Carey obviously thought she had and was banging cups around in the sink, lips pursed, shoulders hunched.

'Mrs Carey, please, we can't hear ourselves think.' The attractive woman, who had to be in her late 60s or early 70s, raised her voice firmly and the housekeeper sighed and reluctantly quietened. 'Thank you. Now, how can I help?' She turned to Martha.

'I really don't know, but I just feel deep down that I have been here before. I have no idea when that could have been, or why, but everything feels so familiar. As soon as I saw the garden I had a hazy vision of being out there – the sun on my face, the smell of apple blossom from the old apple tree with its wonky blue swing; there is an apple tree out there with a wooden swing, isn't there? And it is blue, isn't it? The colour of the sky?'

'How do you know that? I barely remember that swing – it fell apart years ago.' Now it was Bella's turn to whisper and look pale as she groped her way into the chair next to Martha.

A heavy silence hung in the air. 'Gran, you don't look well. What's the matter?' But her grandmother wasn't looking at Bella – she was staring sightlessly out of the window, turning a coaster over and over in her hands.

'Yes, there was a swing and Bella's sister loved it, and yes, it was blue, as even at her young age she was obsessed with the colour.'

'Sarah, don't...' Mrs Carey tried to interrupt, but was waved away impatiently.

'Bella's mother, Faye, was just home from the hospital with her as a newborn and she'd put her down for a nap in her cot upstairs. Well, having just given birth and having Evie, an energetic three-year-old, to entertain was terribly tiring and Faye fell asleep on the sofa downstairs.'

A strange feeling of dread had started to creep up Martha's spine, but she was powerless to interrupt.

The voice faltered, paused a moment, then continued.

CRIME SCENE - DO NOT

'The little one decided to go into the garden for whatever reason – maybe to play outside, who knows? She was three and a half, and although Faye swore the back door was closed and locked, it appears she managed to open it. Anyway, no one knows how much later it was, but the baby crying upstairs woke Faye up and that's when she realised the little girl wasn't in the house.'

'Oh no, that's terrible.' Martha's hand covered her mouth.

'Well, that wasn't the end of it. They scoured the woods behind the house, the fields, knocked on doors, spoke to neighbours; they even dragged the lake, which is a good five miles away – nothing! Faye took to roaming the area night and day and this went on for weeks, months – nothing. Bella's father couldn't forgive her for falling asleep and himself for not being there and giving her enough support, and shot himself a year or two later. And Faye... well, Faye had a complete breakdown and hung herself from the old apple tree in the garden under which they had found the little one's doll's pram; the only sign that she had been out there. I found her body. I'd come to stay to look after her and Bella, who by this time was a toddler. As you can imagine it was a terrible time...'

Tears slid silently down her face, and Martha was aware of Bella quietly sobbing beside her. Martha's guilt at being responsible for dragging up this horror, for reminding them all of their unimaginable loss threatened to overwhelm her.

'Did they ever find her? Bella's sister?'

'No!' came Mrs Carey's terse reply.

Fragments of images, dark and disjointed, jumbled sounds, voices and cries. A car journey, and was that a train? Screwing up her eyes, Martha tried to capture the image. Her head ached with the effort. She was going mad. She hadn't realised that she was clutching her hair, pulling it back from her furrowed forehead in an effort to try to grasp the elusive images, until she felt the grip on her wrist.

Sarah was staring at her: 'That mark in your hairline – it's a birthmark, isn't it?'

Opening her eyes, Martha reddened, 'Yes, I think so, at least as far as I know. I've had it as long as I can remember.'

Gentle fingers touched the faded pink strawberry.

'Evie had a birthmark, a bit darker and definitely larger, but she was such a slight little thing with such fine, golden hair, like a fairy, that it was far more visible. How old are you?'

The abrupt question following the almost dreamy, hypnotic stroking of her face shattered her trance.

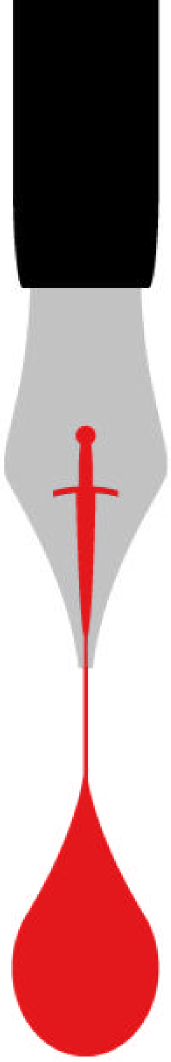
'24.'

'Evie was nearly four when she was taken,' came the stark reply, '20 years ago! This was taken just days before.' A slightly faded colour photo showed the laughing figure of a young woman, head thrown back, long, fair hair floating down her back, arms outstretched to catch the small figure of a young girl as she was thrown up into the air, laughing uproariously.

It couldn't be. That face, even in profile... she recognised it. It was the face that haunted her dreams night after night.

A tentative outstretched hand. 'Evie?'

Photography Andrew Whitton, Getty



WHAT THE JUDGES SAID

LISA JEWELL SAYS: 'The stories I chose were all so polished. Every one was different and I could tell the writers all had an idea of what works in the market and what people want to read. The main thing I was looking for was a strong voice – the sense you can put yourself in the hands of someone else and let them guide you through the story. All these entries had that. I was also struck by the variety. When I wrote the introduction, I knew where I would go with it, so it was really interesting to see how other people read it and went off in completely different directions. In my head, I was thinking about a dark summer memory from years gone by, a twisted family or a missing child, so I loved that the winner, Lindy, went down that route. I chose her story as my winner because she engaged me from the start and left me wanting more. Her descriptions were amazing – I really felt like I was there smelling the blossom in the garden and hearing the creak of the swing. Lindy should definitely keep writing; I can tell she's got what it takes.'

JO CHECKLEY, *PRIMA*'S EDITOR SAYS: 'This was such a tough competition to judge. We had so many high-quality entries and while everyone had the same beginning to use, all the stories took such different twists and turns. What I loved about Lindy's entry was its completeness. Short stories are tough to write and it's hard to get a good plot going as well as forming convincing characters. Lindy achieved it all and I hope she now carries on writing to see where her talent takes her. Well done, Lindy.'

Ask prima

Got a tricky question? Our team of experts is here to help, so go ahead and ask us anything…

CRYSTAL CLEAR

Q I love crystals, but what's the best starter one for my home?

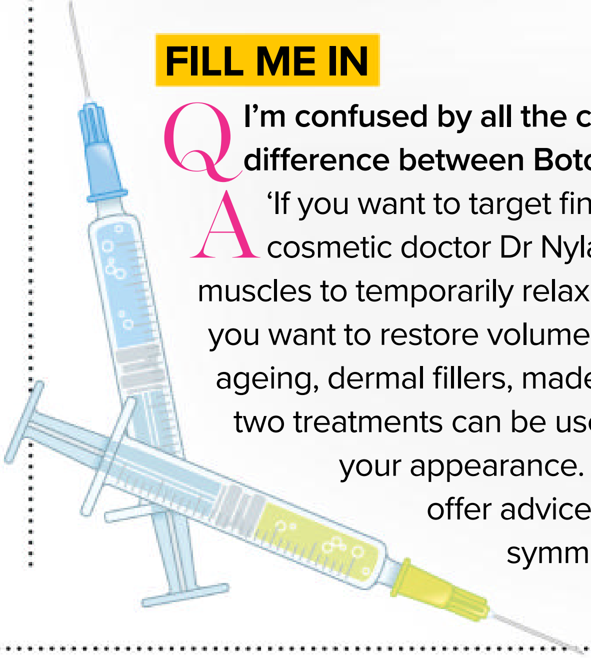
A 'Crystals have been used for years – for protection, warding off evil and healing,' says celebrity psychic Inbaal Honigman. 'But whether or not you believe in their mystical properties, there's no doubt they look fantastic. Crystals hold only positive properties, so you can't go wrong. Go with your intuition when choosing. Rose quartz is said to attract romance, amethyst geodes regulate hormones, while black crystals, such as obsidian and shungite, absorb negativity. White crystals are great catch-all options, with clear quartz said to boost immunity and selenite promoting calm. Some citrine by a laptop is said to bring prosperity, so it's perfect for the home office. Buy from a reputable shop, such as thecrystalhutstore.com.'

FLOWER POWER

Q HOW CAN I BE SURE THE FLOWERS I WANT TO SEND ARE ETHICALLY SOURCED?

A 'Any florist that takes ethics and sustainability seriously will have detailed information available on its website with exactly what it does,' says Beth Cox from Arena Flowers (arenaflowers.com). 'On ours, we explain how we source from ethical and Fairtrade-certified growers and ensure harmful pesticides aren't used. Look out for ethical details such as water saving/recycling and ensuring suppliers pay workers a proper wage. Independent organisations such as The Good Shopping Guide research and verify flower producers.'

FILL ME IN



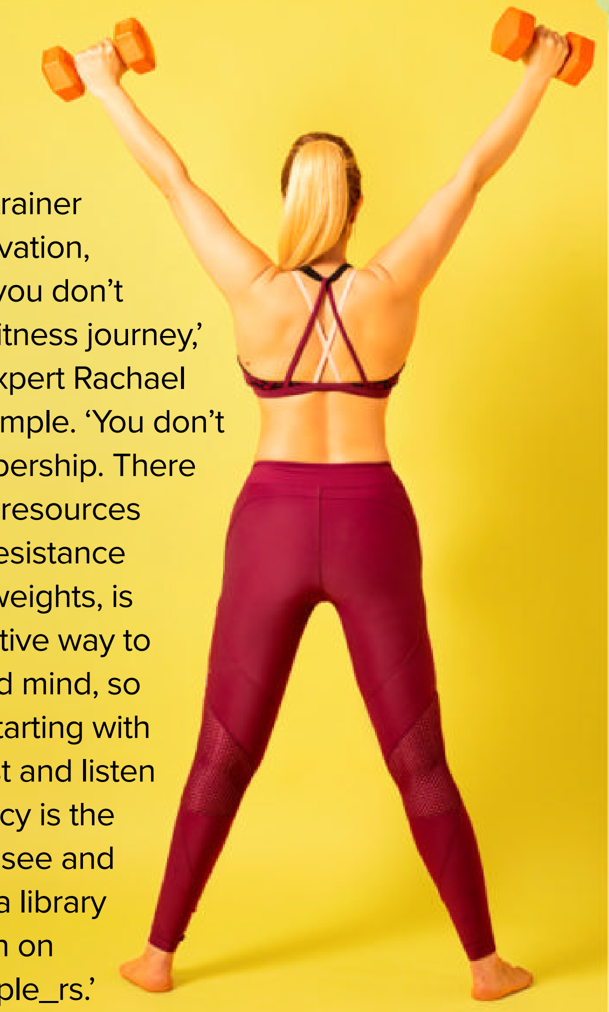
Q I'm confused by all the cosmetic 'tweakments' on offer. What's the difference between Botox and fillers?

A 'If you want to target fine lines, Botox is the ideal choice,' says cosmetic doctor Dr Nyla Raja (doctornyla.com). 'It's injected into the muscles to temporarily relax them and reduce wrinkles and fine lines. If you want to restore volume in areas that have begun to show signs of ageing, dermal fillers, made of hyaluronic acid, are the best option. The two treatments can be used together to balance and complement your appearance. A good doctor will evaluate your face and offer advice on suitable treatments for your skin, facial symmetry and budget.'

GETTING PERSONAL

Q I'm thinking of joining a gym. Will I need a personal trainer?

A 'While a personal trainer can help with motivation, support and guidance, you don't need one to start your fitness journey,' says PT and wellness expert Rachael Sacerdoti from It's So Simple. 'You don't even need a gym membership. There are lots of free workout resources online to do at home. Resistance training, such as lifting weights, is the best and most effective way to build a healthy body and mind, so I'd highly recommend starting with this. Take it slowly at first and listen to your body. Consistency is the most important thing to see and sustain results. There's a library of workouts you can join on instagram.com/itssosimple_rs.'



prima Getting Greener

I'VE HEARD ABOUT HYDROPONICS – WHAT IS IT, AND CAN I DO IT AT HOME?

Hydroponics is a method of growing plants in nutrient-fortified water instead of soil. And it's hoped the technology will help to mitigate future food shortages. It's simple, says Claire Bishop from garden centre Dobbies. 'All you need is a plant, a glass container, natural light and fresh water. You can buy kits (from £11.99, Dobbies). To make your own, ensure your glass container is tall enough to support your plant and no leaves are sitting in the water as this can cause contamination and rot. Place your hydroponic in a bright spot out of direct sunlight, change its water every couple of weeks and feed with liquid fertiliser as you would any other house plant.'

DISHWASHER WASH

Q HOW DO I CLEAN MY DISHWASHER?

A 'First remove the cutlery tray and racks then clear out any food debris,' says *Prima*'s senior homes tester Blossom Boothroyd. 'Place a bowl of white vinegar on the top rack and run a hot cycle. For extra freshening, sprinkle baking soda in the bottom of the empty dishwasher and run a short cycle.'*

prima APPROVED 2023

Tried & Tested

NON-STICK PAN SETS

Want pans that will cook evenly without burning or sticking? We found the best sets you can buy.

BEST NON-STICK PAN SET

Lakeland Classic 5-Piece Pan Set (Lakeland, £134.99)

This quality set stood out for its reliable non-stick coating; even clingy foods such as fried eggs and white sauce slid away with ease, meaning serving and washing up took seconds. It also comes with a generous three-year guarantee.

BEST STAINLESS STEEL PAN SET

M&S 5-Piece Stainless Steel Pan Set (M&S, £99)

With stainless steel saucepans and non-stick frying and milk pans, this stackable set offers versatility. The non-stick coating was impressive, handling frying eggs to perfection, but some scrubbing was needed to rid the saucepans of food residue.

BEST BUDGET PAN SET

Amazon Basics 8-Piece Non-Stick Cookware Set (Amazon, £53.90)

Though not suitable for induction hobs, on all other types, these affordable pans heated up quickly. Effectively non-stick, the frying pan browned meat beautifully and everything proved dishwasher safe, making for a speedy clean-up.

Words Sandra Walsh **Product testing** Mohammed El-Ashkar **Product testing words** Hannah Mendelsohn **Photography** Getty, Mark Scott

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*Follow manufacturer's instructions and clean at your own risk

Get MORE for YOUR *money*

Energy-saving HOME improvements *that really work*

From quick fixes to major projects, these are the jobs worth putting on your to-do list

Sky-high gas and electricity prices have left us all looking for ways to tame our bills, and making our homes more energy-efficient is a good place to start. But with little cash to spare, you'll want be sure that any money you spend on green home improvements pays off in the long run.

To help you decide, we've broken down how much you can expect to pay for a range of energy-saving home improvements and how much you stand to save.

Improving your home's energy efficiency can add to its value. Over three-quarters (76%) of prospective buyers say that the energy consumption of their next home has become more important since the cost-of-living crisis*.

INSULATION

Preventing heat from escaping our homes is an obvious way to reduce energy usage. This can be as simple as insulating hot water pipes and the hot water cylinder, but bigger projects such as insulating the loft or cavity walls will lead to bigger savings. Well-insulated homes tend to be valued up to a fifth more than similar uninsulated properties, research by Admiral Money has shown.

WHAT YOU'LL PAY Fitting foam insulation around hot water pipes and increasing the thickness of the insulation around a hot water cylinder costs as little as £30 – and is easy to do yourself. Expect to pay around £640 to insulate the loft of a semi-detached house with 270mm of mineral wool – or around £1,000 for cavity wall insulation.

WHAT YOU'LL SAVE Lagging hot water pipes and the hot water cylinder with an 80mm-thick jacket could save you £80 a year. If you had no insulation in place previously, you could save £355 with loft insulation or up to £395 with cavity wall insulation.

DRAUGHT-PROOFING

For quick fixes that won't break the bank, fit a draught excluder to chimney openings or fix self-adhesive foam strips around gappy windows and doors.

WHAT YOU'LL PAY A chimney draught excluder such as a Chimney Sheep costs from £18. Professional draught-proofing will cost around £225 for a semi-detached house, but doing it yourself will be cheaper.

WHAT YOU'LL SAVE Stopping chimney draughts could save you £90 annually and draught-proofing windows and doors could save you up to £60. With professional draught-proofing, you stand to save £125 a year, so it should pay for itself in under two years.

Words Emilie Martin **Photography** Getty
Unless otherwise stated, all pricing calculations are from Energy Saving Trust *Savills **Admiral Money ***Fraunhofer Institute for Building Physics

BOILER REPLACEMENT

Heating our homes and hot water accounts for over half of a typical household's energy bills, according to Energy Saving Trust (EST). So switching to a more energy-efficient boiler, or to an altogether greener alternative, should help reduce your energy bill.

Air source heat pumps, which capture heat from the air outside and use it in your central heating system and to heat your hot water, are being touted as the next big thing in making our homes more energy efficient. And installing one could add 10% to the value of your home when it's time to sell**.

WHAT YOU'LL PAY It costs around £4,000 to replace a gas boiler with a more energy-efficient one. Homeowners in Northern Ireland may be eligible for a grant to put towards the cost of replacing an older boiler with a more energy-efficient one through the Boiler Replacement Scheme (nidirect.gov.uk/articles/grant-replace-your-boiler).

Air source heat pumps are much pricier: around £7,000-£13,000 (more if you need to tweak your hot water or central heating system to accommodate one). However, you may be eligible for a grant of up to £5,000 through the Boiler Upgrade Scheme (gov.uk/apply-boiler-upgrade-scheme) in England and Wales. If you live in Scotland, a grant or loan from Home Energy Scotland (homeenergyscotland.org/funding/grants-loans/overview) could help cover the cost of this and other green home improvements.

WHAT YOU'LL SAVE If you live in a semi-detached house and replace an existing G-rated gas boiler (the lowest energy-efficiency rating) with a new condensing A-rated one, you could slash up to £540 a year off your energy bills. If you replaced the same G-rated gas boiler with an air source heat pump, you'd be looking at a yearly saving of £590 (or £1,500 in Northern Ireland).

EV CHARGING POINT

You're only likely to install a home charging point if you own or are about to buy an electric vehicle (EV), but installing a charge point could add between £3,000 and £5,000 to the value of your home, according to The National Association of Property Buyers (NAPB). 'As the number of EVs increases exponentially, so does the requirement for homes with chargers – buyers much prefer the convenience over installing one themselves,' says NAPB founder Jonathan Rolande.

WHAT YOU'LL PAY Around £800.

WHAT YOU'LL SAVE It costs roughly half as much to charge an electric vehicle at home as it does to charge one using a public charging point, figures from the RAC show. The cost to charge a car to 80% at home will be around £17.87.

SOLAR PANELS

The idea of generating your own electricity has never seemed more appealing; a quarter of us have researched solar panels in the last year, according to Savills. And installing solar panels has the potential to increase the value of your home by a quarter, Admiral Money's research reveals. You might be surprised to hear it, given our weather, but solar panels are suitable for most homes in the UK – although they may not be the best choice for those with a north-facing roof or if your house is largely shaded from the sun.

WHAT YOU'LL PAY A fairly typical 3.5kWp system (this will typically take up around 15-20m² roof area, making it suitable for the average terraced house) costs around £5,500, but prices vary. It's worth getting at least three quotes from MCS-certified (mcscertified.com) installers.

WHAT YOU'LL SAVE You'll save the most money if someone is at home during the day (when you are producing the most energy) to use the electricity you generate. Any surplus electricity that is not used will be sent to the grid, for which you will be paid. You could save up to £610 a year if you live in London and sell any surplus electricity through the Smart Export Guarantee (£545 in Stirling or £580 in Aberystwyth).

> Installing a 'smart' thermostat, such as those from Tado or Nest, will set you back around £200 but could cut your energy use by a quarter***.

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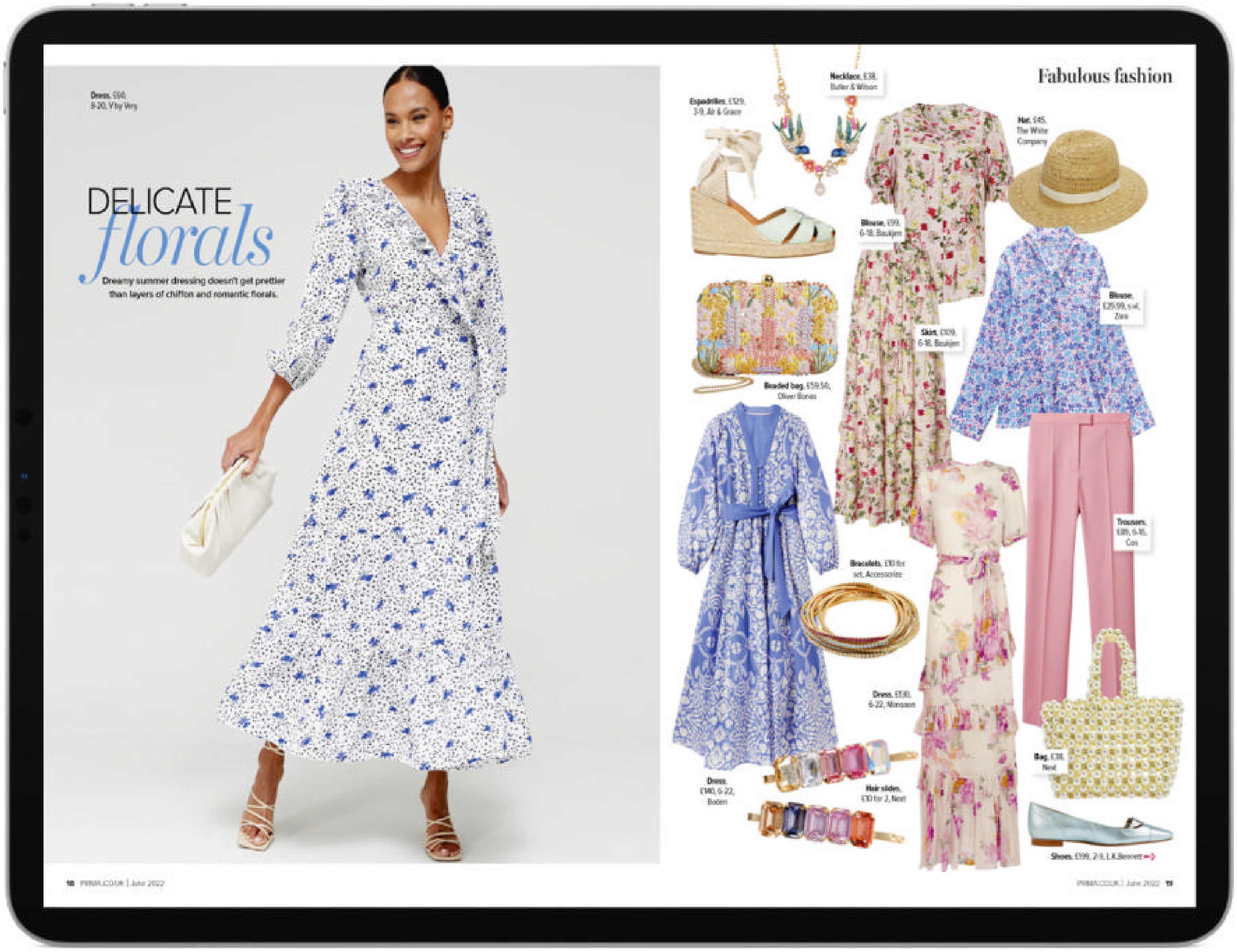

DELICATE *florals*

Dreamy summer dressing doesn't get prettier than layers of chiffon and romantic florals.

Fabulous fashion

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Exercises to make your daily life EASIER

It's the newest fitness trend for 2023 and its official name is 'functional training'. Here's why we should all be giving it a go...

However young at heart we feel, we can't ignore very real concerns about the physical changes associated with ageing. Everything from aching joints to a lack of upper body strength can limit our lives, so building a resilient body is important to maintaining the joy and freedom of later life. Problems can start sooner than you might imagine: research shows that the rate of falls increases sharply from as early as 40.

And while exercise is a good way to help you feel strong and supple – a 2018 study found that physical activity can reduce the rate of falls by up to 32% – one kind of workout could make a particularly big difference.

Enter the latest fitness trend everyone's talking about: functional training. The word 'functional' essentially means that these exercises mimic the movements you do in your everyday life – such as getting up off the floor, or lifting heavy shopping bags – making them perfect for maintaining strength and stability as you age.

'Rather than just improving your general fitness, functional exercises make you stronger in the movements you do on a day-to-day basis,' says Caroline Bragg, personal trainer and head of pre- and postnatal fitness at fitness app Give Me Strength. 'It's about moving your body to make your life easier.'

● GET MOBILE The biggest benefit of mimicking movements you do regularly, such as bending, lifting and turning, is an improvement in your mobility. 'That's the range of movement within your joints such as hips, wrists, knees and ankles,' explains Caroline. 'Having joints with a large range means they can bend and twist further, making our lives easier.'

The key is to use your workouts to build more range than you might need in normal life. For instance, squatting with your hips close to the floor when you exercise means it won't be as challenging to sit into a chair in real life, when your hips only move through half that length. If you need to sit into a chair that's much lower than you're used to, or you have to sit on the ground, you're less likely to be injured.

> 'Picking up a 15kg child will be a breeze if you can lift 20kg'

In fact, a recent study found that people who scored poorly on a function movement test (which included squats and overhead reaches) were six times more likely to be injured than those who had a good range of movement.

● BUILD STRENGTH 'To support your mobile joints, you need to work the stabilizer muscles as well as the prime movers,' says Caroline. 'As functional training uses your body or additional weights for resistance, it's brilliant for strengthening muscles and warding off osteoporosis and sarcopenia, which post-menopausal women are at risk of.'

Functional exercises have been shown to improve strength, endurance and muscular force more than the kinds of strength training exercises that aren't replicable in daily-life activities (such as using leg-press machines). As with mobility, you can use your exercises to build more strength than you might need. 'Picking up a young child weighing 15kg will be a breeze if you can lift 20kg, and you'll feel more confident carrying 5kg of shopping if you know you've carried 10kg worth of weights,' says Caroline.

Even if you're not worried about lacking mobility and strength at the moment, finessing these skills now will help slow down the natural decline of muscle, bone and joint strength, so you stay more mobile and stronger for longer.

'Mobility is a "use it or lose it" skill,' says Caroline, but it's never too late to start.

You also don't need to join a gym to reap the rewards. Although fitness centres will have a bigger range of equipment, plus trainers who can help ensure you're doing the movements properly, you can try plenty of functional exercises at home to develop your mobility and strength.

FUNCTIONAL TRAINING EXERCISES TO HELP YOU…

…GET UP EASILY FROM FALLS

While avoiding falls is the aim of the game, if you ever find yourself down, then you need to be strong enough to get back up. Exercises such as press-ups help you build the strength to push your body weight against gravity.

'Begin with incline press-ups on a high surface such as a mantelpiece, placing your hands either side of your chest and stepping your feet back,' says Caroline. 'Press away until your arms are straight and lower back towards the surface. When you can comfortably do this 10 times, lower the surface to your sofa or coffee table, and then the floor.'

…DO CHORES COMFORTABLY

'We rarely practise twisting through our spine, yet we do it all the time: when we grab something from the backseat of the car or unload the dishwasher into the cupboards,' says Caroline.

For a strong spine, practise trunk rotations. Standing tall with your feet shoulder-width apart, place your hands on the opposite shoulders. Brace your core and keep your hips pointing forwards while you twist your upper body from one side to the other, going through your full range of motion. Hold a dumbbell or something weighty when you're ready to progress. ➜

…LIFT HEAVY SHOPPING

Do you struggle to lift the weight of your weekly shop in and out of the car, or from the store to your front door? You can practise picking up heavy bags with a movement called a suitcase deadlift.

For this, brace your core, bend your knees and push your hips backwards, so you end up in a 90-degrees position. Your back, neck and head should be straight the whole time. When you've nailed that movement, add resistance with a kettlebell or a bag filled with heavy objects. Hold it on one side and tap it to the floor as you push your hips back, but don't let your hips fall to the side.

'The "farmer's carry" is also a brilliant way to build strength endurance, which is how long your muscles can withstand resistance,' says Caroline. Hold a heavy dumbbell in each hand and walk the length of a room and back. It will strengthen your grip, as well as your arms, shoulders and core.

…LIFT LITTLE ONES

Squat thrusters are a brilliant way to build the whole-body strength it takes to bend to the floor and lift kids to your chest without pain. Hold your hands in fists in front of your shoulders and brace your core before bending your knees to lower into a squat position – go as low as you can. Press through your heels to stand back up, lifting your arms over your head as you do so. Try holding tins, a broom or dumbbells in your hands for extra resistance.

> 'Mobility is a 'use it or lose it' skill, but it's never too late to start'

…CLIMB THE STAIRS

Step-ups are a great way to build stability in muscles around the knees and ankles for protection when climbing stairs. Place one foot on a step and use the strength of your leg to step your other foot up to meet it, tapping the step, then lower back down. Push through the raised foot rather than the one on the ground.

…VACUUM AND SWEEP WITH EASE

When we're walking, jogging, cleaning or reaching across the kitchen, we transfer weight from one foot to the other. That's why lunges can be so useful.

'Prioritise reverse lunges and lateral lunges that mirror your daily movement of stepping and turning,' says Caroline. Beginning with your feet shoulder-width apart, take a big step backwards with one foot and bring your back knee to the floor as low as it can go. Then press through your front foot to step the back leg up to the standing position. Take it laterally by stepping your leg to the side and letting your hips lower towards the floor before pushing back to standing.

Your functional fit-kit

THE APP: Pliability analyses your movements to identify which muscles and joints lack mobility, then shares targeted follow-along videos. Sign up for a seven-day free trial. From £12.49 a month; download from your app store.

THE WEIGHTS: This feels like a major investment for just one kettlebell, but the adjustable Jaxjox KettlebellConnect 2.0 (£180, Argos) allows you to digitally change the resistance from 5.5kg to 19kg, so it will stick with you as you continue to improve – and will save money (and clutter) in the long run.

THE MAT: If you're doing these exercises at home, a soft and non-slip exercise mat is essential. Try the affordable Maximo fitness mat, which comes wrapped in a handy carry-strap. £26.99, Amazon.

maximo
FITNESS

Words Chloe Gray **Photography** Getty

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SARAH'S surgery

Do you have a health question you would like to ask Dr Sarah Brewer? Email her at prima@hearst.co.uk.

How to reduce your risk of dementia

Dr Sarah Brewer shares the latest advice on midlife precautions you can take to stave off the disease

If you're worried about developing dementia, you're not alone. It's very common – and distressing – for midlifers to watch parents or loved ones slowly forget who they are; one in 14 people over the age of 65 has dementia and the condition affects one in six people over 80 years. It's estimated that by 2025, more than 1m people will be affected.

But it's not something we need to accept as a natural or inevitable part of ageing: it is possible to reduce your risk. According to Dementia UK, genetic factors account for less than 10% of cases. According to the Lancet Commission on dementia, 40% of cases could be prevented or delayed by addressing lifestyle-related factors such as physical inactivity, obesity, diabetes, social isolation and alcohol consumption.

WHAT IS DEMENTIA?

It usually starts with forgetfulness, poor concentration and difficulty making decisions. The most common types are: Alzheimer's disease, in which clumps of protein (plaque) form around brain cells, affecting their function; vascular dementia, which results from reduced blood flow to the brain; and frontotemporal dementia, where parts of the brain start to shrink.

Did you know?

Women over 60 are twice as likely to receive a dementia diagnosis as men, possibly because women tend to live longer.

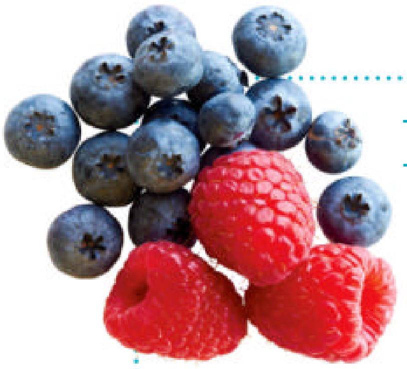
KEEP MOVING

Physical exercise hugely benefits both cognitive functioning and wellbeing. Aim for at least 20 minutes of aerobic exercise, such as walking, running or cycling, per day and one to two sessions to train your muscles a week. This doesn't necessarily mean you have to go to the gym – yoga, walking and even strenuous gardening count, too. Reduce the amount of time spent being still and remember that any activity is better than none.

Yoga is great for training your muscles

STAY CURIOUS

Much like lifting weights to strengthen and maintain your muscles, mental stimulation is vital for protecting your brain health. By challenging the brain through activities such as reading or learning a new language, you can retain brain cells that are associated with reduced risk of dementia. Focus on having fun with friends; staying socially active is like exercise for the brain and has been linked with maintaining better brain function, sharpening memory and reducing dementia risk.



BRAIN FOOD

Diet changes can delay the onset of dementia for as long as possible, says Dr Annette Creedon of the British Nutrition Foundation.

The MIND diet (a hybrid of the Mediterranean and DASH diets) may reduce the risk of dementia by up to 50%. Benefits are seen even in those who only moderately follow this dietary pattern, which recommends nuts, beans, wholegrains and olive oil while limiting butter, cheese and fried or fast food. It also specifically recommends berries and green leafy vegetables. The diet is rich in antioxidant carotenoids and flavonoids, which are thought to protect the brain and may also have beneficial effects on our gut bacteria.

Rory Batt, a nutritionist and health coach at Marvin's Den (marvinsden.com), says dementia is partly a result of having impaired glucose metabolism in the brain. He recommends eating a diet low in carbohydrates, fasting intermittently, restoring insulin sensitivity with a diet rich in micronutrients (such as magnesium zinc and vitamin D), and eliminating processed foods, reducing alcohol intake, cutting out sugar and reducing stress.

Quit smoking

It increases plaque build-up in your blood vessels, which prevents blood reaching your brain and raises the risk of dementia.

MONITOR YOUR BLOOD PRESSURE

A study that followed 8,639 British civil servants for 30 years found that having raised blood pressure at the age of 50 was associated with an increased risk of dementia in later life. This was thought to be due to a hardening and furring up of the arteries causing reduced blood flow to the brain. Diet and lifestyle are key to helping bring down your blood pressure. See mylowerbloodpressure.com for details, and take any medication prescribed to control hypertension.

Healthy diet and lifestyle lowers blood pressure

MAINTAIN YOUR SMILE

There appears to be a link between dementia and oral health – particularly gum disease. This is because bacteria that cause inflammation and bleeding gums can travel from your mouth through the bloodstream to the brain, where they may affect the health of cerebral blood vessels.

Amanda Sheehan, dental therapist and hygienist at TePe, suggests brushing your teeth twice a day using fluoride toothpaste and cleaning between your teeth at least once a day (most dental issues start where food and plaque accumulate and your toothbrush can't reach). 'Always go to bed with clean teeth – the production of saliva is reduced at night, which lowers the saliva's capacity to protect your teeth,' Sheehan says. 'Change your toothbrush regularly (once every three months), and use a tongue cleaner to remove plaque build-up from the surface of your tongue.' Visit your dentist regularly as it is easier to treat gum disease when detected early.

Poor oral health and gum disease is linked to dementia

KEEP YOUR GUT IN MIND

The balance of bacteria within your gut can affect brain function due to the chemicals they produce. Mental health issues may also be associated with altered gut bacteria. Bio-Kult Mind is the first probiotic supplement designed to improve both digestive and cognitive health, combining live bacteria, flavonoids, grape and wild blueberry extracts plus zinc. £20.99 at Holland & Barrett.

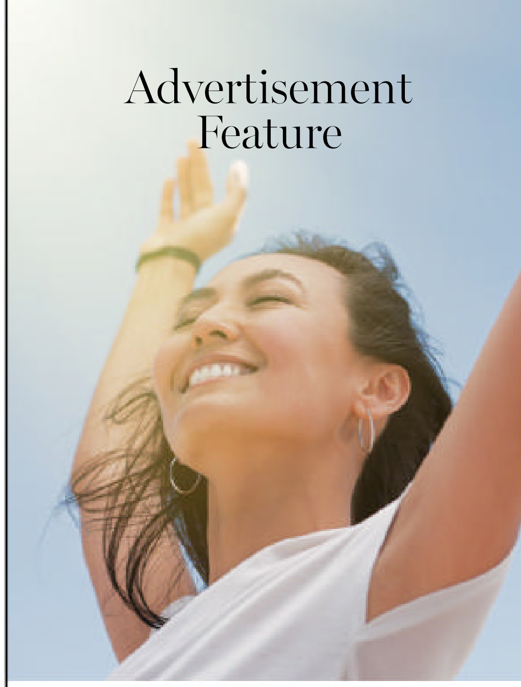
REST AND REPAIR

According to Dr Jenny Barnett, chief scientific officer of Five Lives (fivelives.health), sleep helps the brain repair itself. Cut out caffeine after 3pm as consuming caffeine a few hours before bed can negatively impact sleep, affecting your capacity to learn new things and consolidate memories.

• *For advice and information, visit dementiauk.org/get-support*

Photography Getty **With thanks to** Dr Shireen Kassam (consultant haematologist at King's College Hospital and founder of Plant-Based Health Professionals UK), Dr Karen Dening of Dementia UK and Dr Vishal Shah (medical director at Thriva)

Advertisement Feature



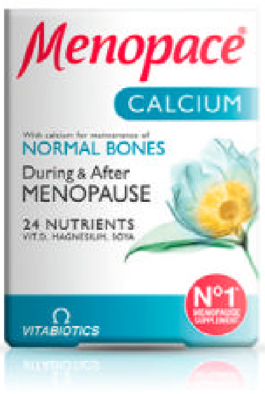
BONE HEALTH SUPPORT

Looking after our bone health is vital as we get older, especially during and after the menopause. Menopace Calcium, from the experts at Vitabiotics, is an advanced supplement of 24 nutrients designed for this time.

The comprehensive formula includes 700mg calcium per daily intake, as well as magnesium and zinc, all of which contribute to the maintenance of normal bones. Plus it contains vitamin D, which assists with the absorption and usage of calcium, as well as the normal function of the immune system.

Menopace Calcium also provides vitamin B6, which helps to regulate hormonal activity, vitamin B1, which contributes to healthy heart function, and 100mg soya isoflavones.

Vitabiotics Menopace Calcium, RRP £12.50 for 60 tablets, is available from Boots, pharmacies, health stores and vitabiotics.com



8 HORMONES *every woman should know about*

We're often told that how we feel is 'down to our hormones', but how many of us actually know what that means? Here's our guide to what they are, why they matter and how to tell if they're out of sync

1 THYROID

WHAT IT DOES: The thyroid gland releases hormones that act as your body's 'metabolic thermostat', says Dr Cynthia Stuenkel, clinical professor of medicine at the University of California, San Diego. From your appetite and energy levels to the flow of your periods, your thyroid plays an important role in many different internal functions. It's also the most common source of endocrine disorders in women.

SIGNS IT'S OFF: If your thyroid produces too much of these hormones, you may overeat, feel nervous or agitated, suffer bone loss or heart palpitations or feel hot all the time. Produce too little, and everything slows down, Dr Stuenkel explains. Your thinking grows foggy, your energy levels plummet and your menstrual cycles may be longer and heavier, she says. A thyroid-stimulating hormone (TSH) test can help a doctor assess your levels.

2 CORTISOL

WHAT IT DOES: It spikes when you're stressed. It also assists with memory formation, helps control blood sugar levels and promotes or limits inflammation.

SIGNS IT'S OFF: A flushed face, hair loss, fine hairs covering your face, osteoporosis and menstrual cycle irregularities are all signs your cortisol levels may be off. A blood test can tell your doctor what might be up.

3 OESTROGEN

WHAT IT DOES: As the primary female sex hormone produced by the ovaries, oestrogen helps develop and maintain the reproductive system and female characteristics such as breasts and pubic hair.

SIGNS IT'S OFF: Irregular and absent periods could indicate your body isn't ovulating as it should, while mood swings, hot flashes and other menopausal symptoms are also signs. Your doctor may prescribe a hormonal birth control method to deal with symptoms, while lifestyle changes such as exercising to maintain a healthy weight can help.

4

PROGESTERONE

WHAT IT DOES: As ovaries ramp up the production of oestrogen, they simultaneously slow down the production of the other sex hormone: progesterone. It's a vital seesaw that keeps your reproductive system running. Progesterone is also an important pregnancy hormone that helps your womb accept and adapt to the presence of sperm. 'We sometimes call it the Valium hormone because when it's very high – around day 19 of your cycle – you feel very mellow, you sleep well and you eat more,' says Dr Louann Brizendine, professor of neuropsychiatry at the University of California, San Francisco. Before this progesterone peak, a milder uptick in progesterone – around days 10 and 14 of the cycle – energises thinking and behaviour.

SIGNS IT'S OFF: Pregnancy complications, irregular or abnormal periods and low energy or weight gain could all be the result of progesterone issues. A simple progesterone blood test can check your levels.

5 GHRELIN

WHAT IT DOES: This hormone fires up your 'feed me' urges. It also tells your gut to start making the digestive acids and juices that will allow it to break down the foods you eat.

SIGNS IT'S OFF: You're hungry again very soon after eating or you don't feel satisfied even after eating excessively. Too little sleep and too much stress can both throw off your ghrelin levels. Ghrelin issues can also stem from carb- or sugar-heavy diets, suggests research from the *British Journal Of Nutrition*.

6

PARATHYROID

WHAT IT DOES: It helps regulate your blood, organs and bone calcium levels. It also helps your body break down and metabolise vitamin D.

SIGNS IT'S OFF: Hand or foot spasms and an irregular heartbeat are signs it's low. Dehydration, kidney stones and osteoporosis are linked to overproduction of parathyroid. A blood test can tell your doctor if you're making too much or too little of it.

7 MELATONIN

WHAT IT DOES: By regulating your body's circadian clock, melatonin helps you get to sleep at night and also plays a role in your appetite and energy levels, says Dr Michael Grandner, director of the Sleep and Health Research Program at the University of Arizona.

SIGNS IT'S OFF: You feel sleepy during the day and energised late in the evening – the time your body should be settling down and preparing for sleep. Your appetite and energy levels may also surge and flag at odd times. A blood or urine test can tell a doctor if you're truly deficient in melatonin. But for most people, sticking to a consistent sleep, wake and meal schedule can help get your melatonin – and your body's circadian clock – back on track.

8 INSULIN

WHAT IT DOES: It allows the cells in your muscles, fat and liver to absorb the glucose – or energy – circulating in your blood. This energy comes from the foods you eat.

SIGNS IT'S OFF: Too much or too little insulin affects your body's ability to manage blood glucose. At first, this could result in extreme thirst, urinating all the time or unusual skin patches. Later, it can develop into type 1 or type 2 diabetes. A blood glucose test (A1C) can identify insulin issues.

Words Markham Heid for *Prevention*

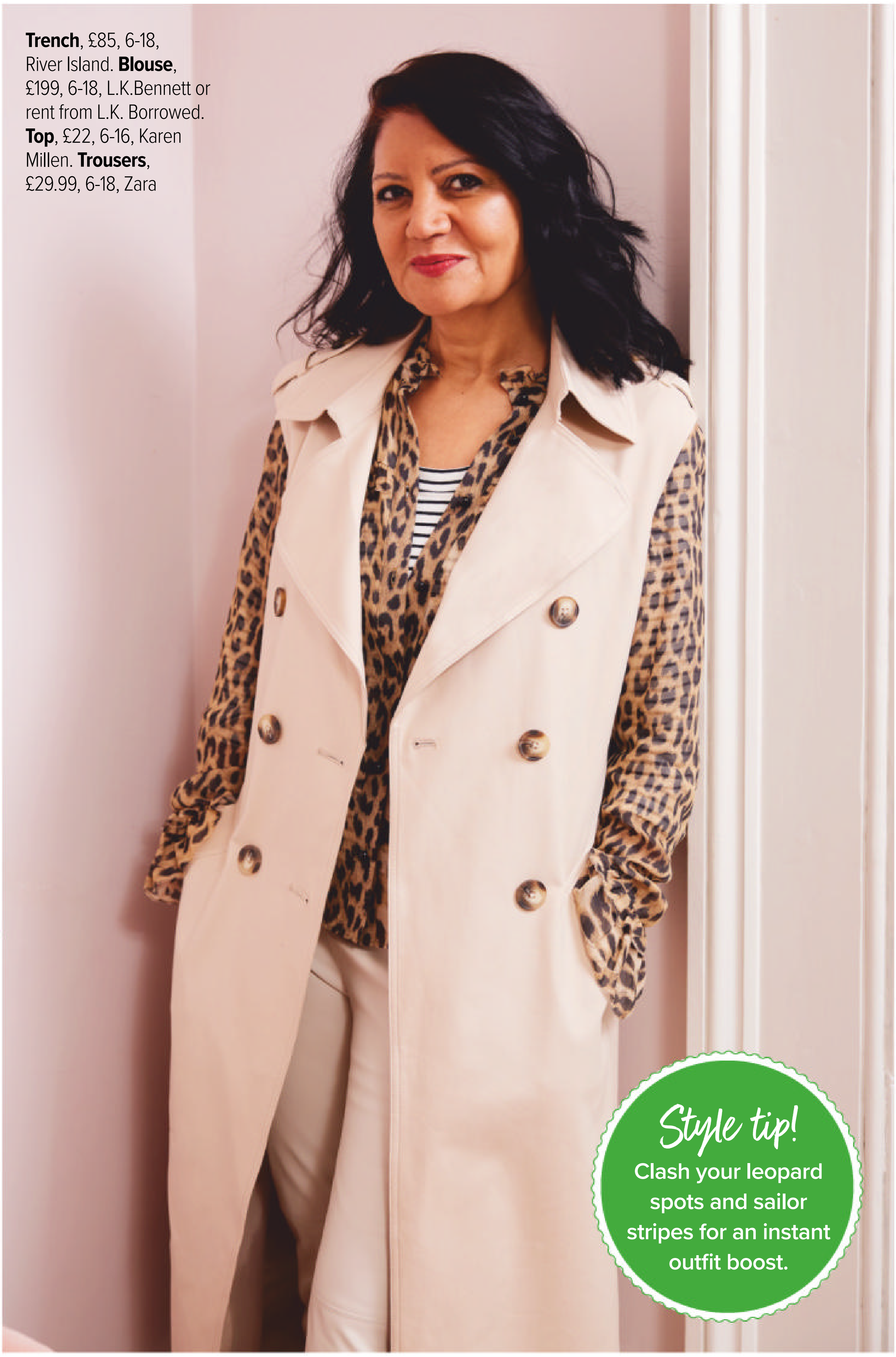
Dress with confidence!

The new season is here and it's time to reset your style with a dream double act. Guaranteed to work wonders on your shape and wardrobe, it's as easy as 1+1=2!

SHILPA PATEL, 60, from Wallington, Greater London, works for the NHS

SLEEVELESS JACKET + LEATHER TROUSERS

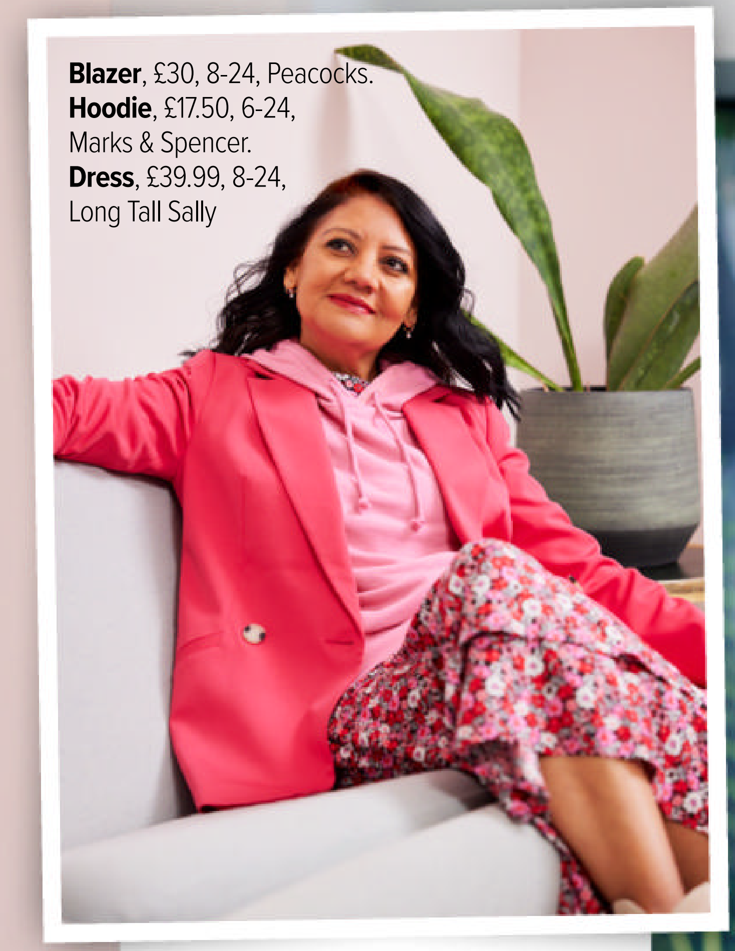
This season, why not take on two trends in one look? Sleeveless jackets and leather trousers stand out on their own, but they work even better as a dynamic double act. The combination of sharp tailoring plus tough leather will give your look a modern edge.



Trench, £85, 6-18, River Island. **Blouse**, £199, 6-18, L.K.Bennett or rent from L.K. Borrowed. **Top**, £22, 6-16, Karen Millen. **Trousers**, £29.99, 6-18, Zara

Style tip!

Clash your leopard spots and sailor stripes for an instant outfit boost.



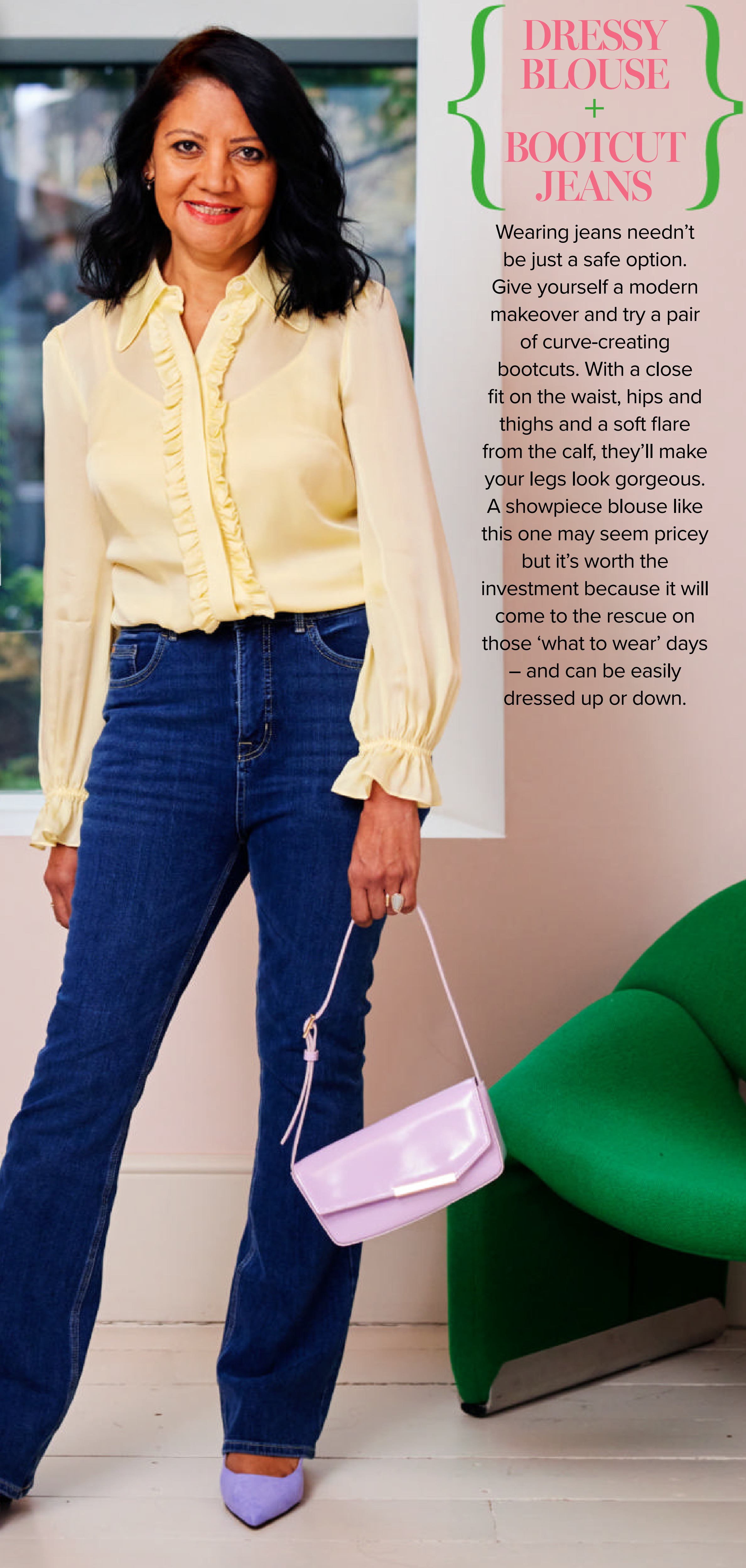
Blazer, £30, 8-24, Peacocks.
Hoodie, £17.50, 6-24, Marks & Spencer.
Dress, £39.99, 8-24, Long Tall Sally

PRACTICAL + FEMININE

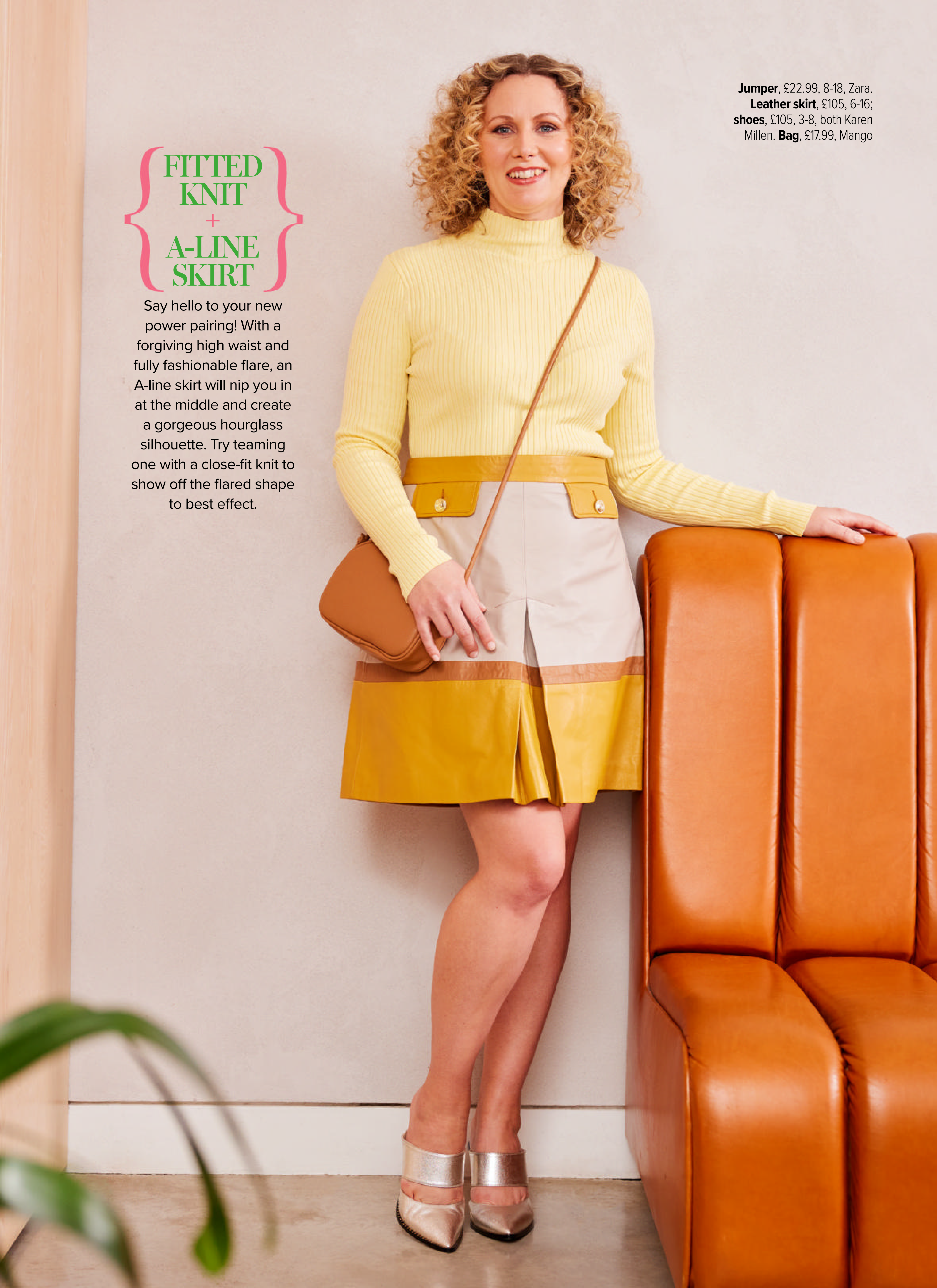
This is the season for dressing down feminine pieces with casual separates. Try pairing florals, lace and chiffon with sportswear, canvas and denim to create go-everywhere outfits that are both pretty and practical. Try adding a sporty hoodie to your outfits – you'll be surprised how chic it looks.

DRESSY BLOUSE + BOOTCUT JEANS

Wearing jeans needn't be just a safe option. Give yourself a modern makeover and try a pair of curve-creating bootcuts. With a close fit on the waist, hips and thighs and a soft flare from the calf, they'll make your legs look gorgeous. A showpiece blouse like this one may seem pricey but it's worth the investment because it will come to the rescue on those 'what to wear' days – and can be easily dressed up or down.



Blouse, £229, 6-18; **bag**, £199, both L.K.Bennett. **Jeans**, £45, 6-24, Marks & Spencer.
Jewellery, all Shilpa's own.
Shoes, £39.99, 7-13, Long Tall Sally



FITTED KNIT + A-LINE SKIRT

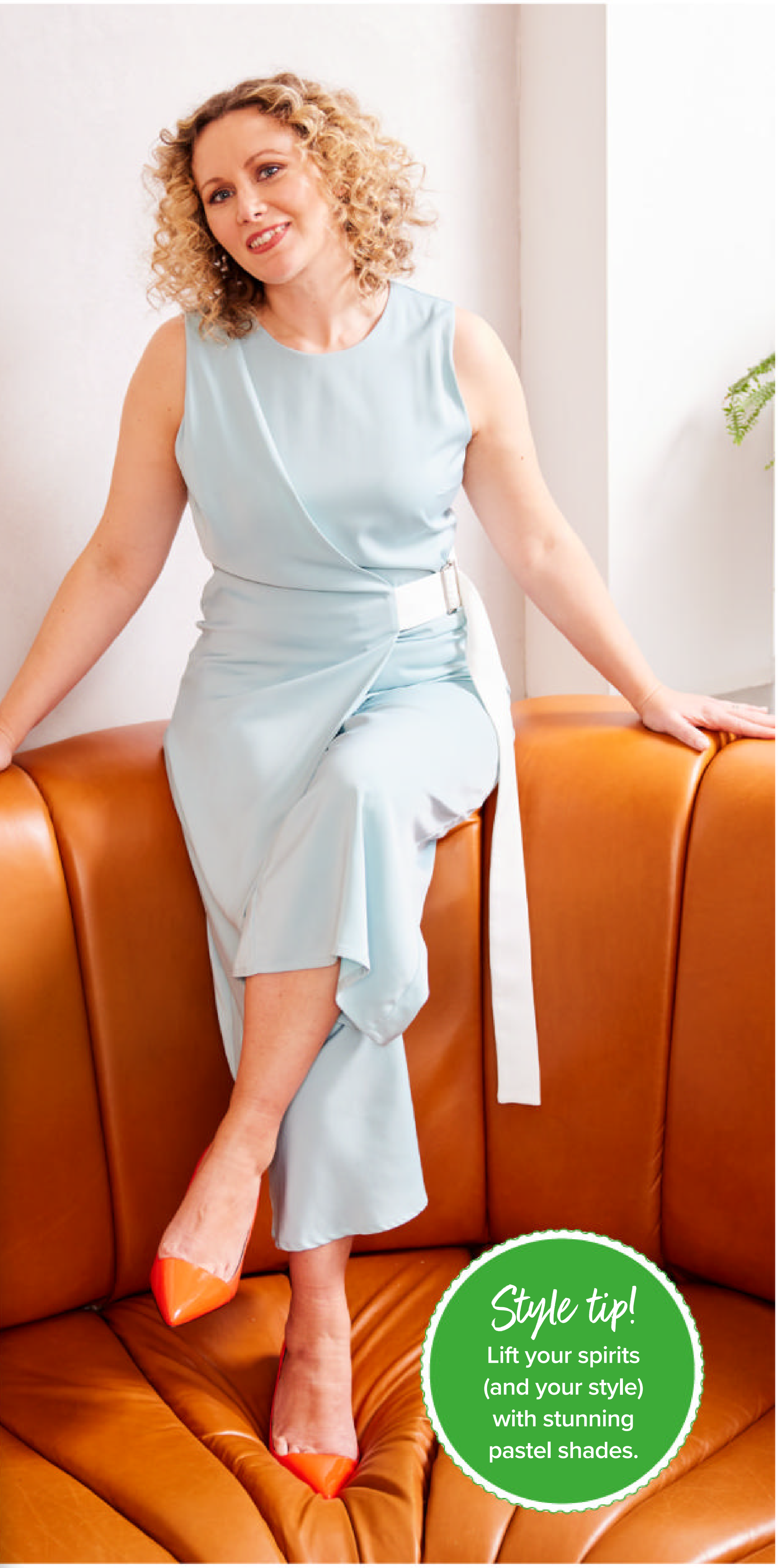
Say hello to your new power pairing! With a forgiving high waist and fully fashionable flare, an A-line skirt will nip you in at the middle and create a gorgeous hourglass silhouette. Try teaming one with a close-fit knit to show off the flared shape to best effect.

Jumper, £22.99, 8-18, Zara. **Leather skirt**, £105, 6-16; **shoes**, £105, 3-8, both Karen Millen. **Bag**, £17.99, Mango

DERRYLE NAYLOR, 43, from Southampton, Hampshire, works as a pre-school practitioner

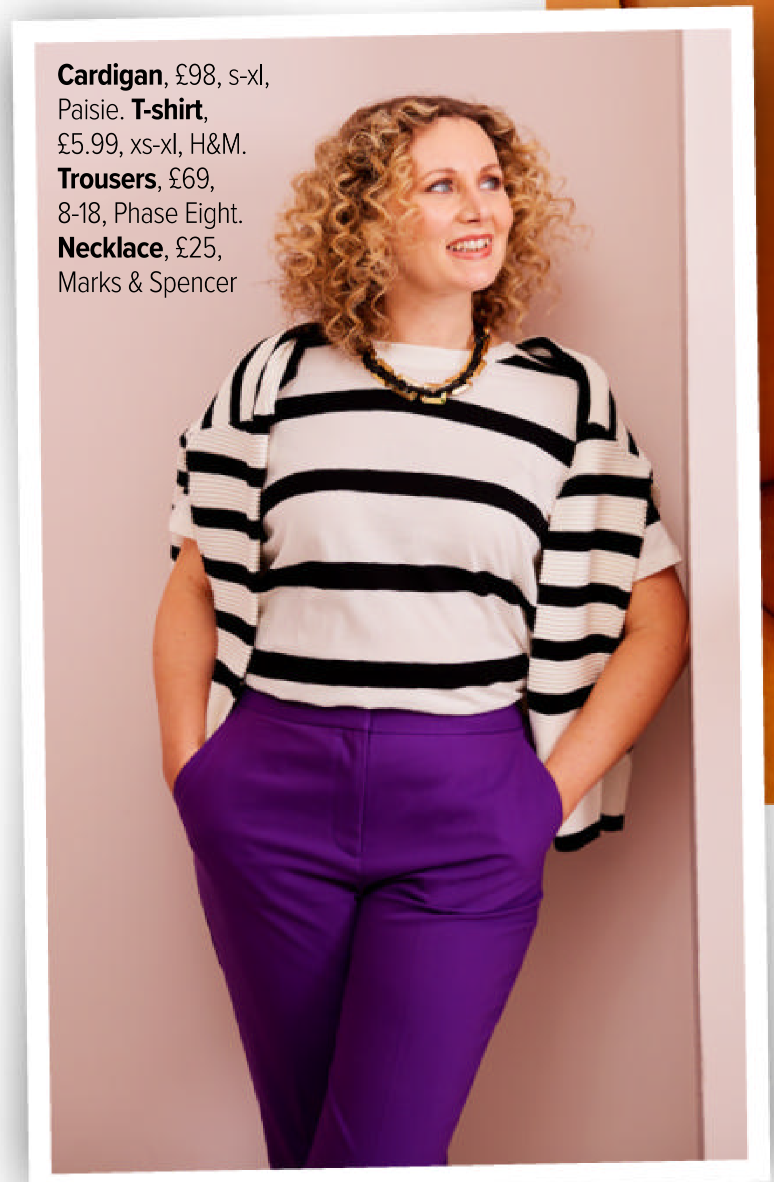
ONE = DONE!

One for all and all for one! Why complicate matters when a one-piece can work wonders? We love the belted shape and beautiful wrap effect of this jumpsuit. Slip it on, knot the belt and go – what could be easier? Style with contrasting heels and step out knowing that you look gorgeous.



Jumpsuit, £108, 6-16, Paisie. **Shoes**, £279, 2-9, L.K.Bennett

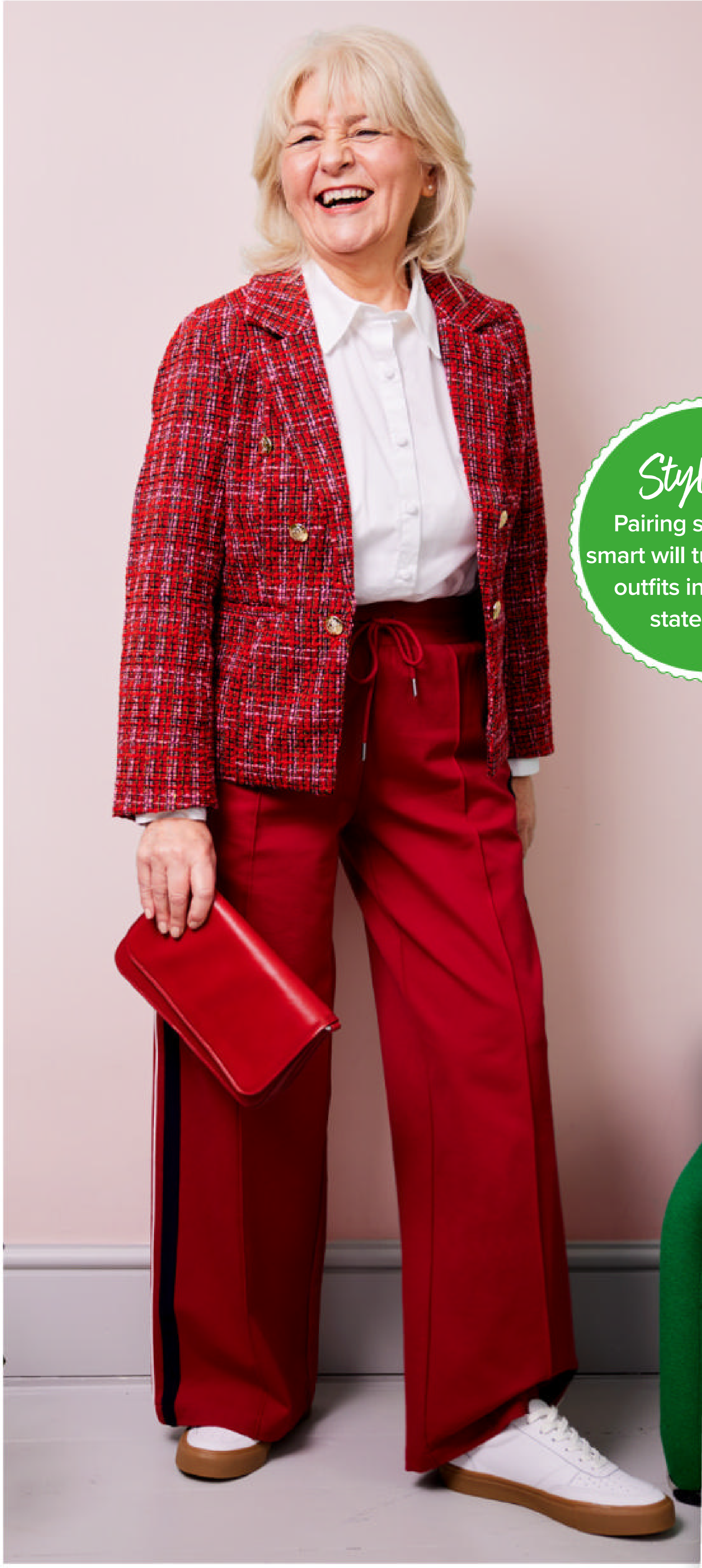
Style tip! Lift your spirits (and your style) with stunning pastel shades.



Cardigan, £98, s-xl, Paisie. **T-shirt**, £5.99, xs-xl, H&M. **Trousers**, £69, 8-18, Phase Eight. **Necklace**, £25, Marks & Spencer

STRIPES + STRIPES

Oh, how we love a stripe! Why not go all-out and try adding a second stripe to the mix? Thin ones, wide ones or colourful ones – experiment with your pairings until you find a combination that works. Whether you clash or co-ordinate, you'll be making a style statement.



Blazer, £49.99, 6-18, PixieGirl.
Shirt, £36, 6-22, Next.
Trousers, £35, 6-24, Marks & Spencer.
Bag, £36, Mango.
Trainers, £55, 3-8, Anyday at John Lewis & Partners

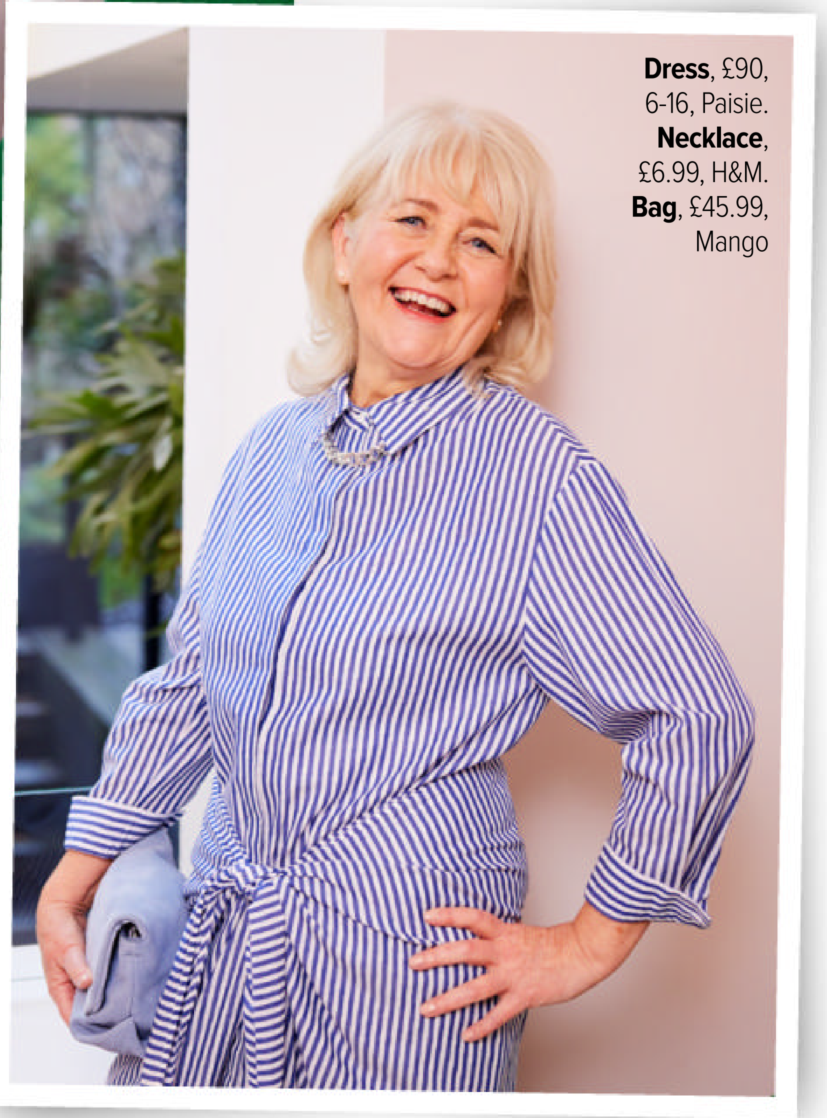
Style tip!

Pairing sporty with smart will turn everyday outfits into fashion statements.

MAGGIE McCARTHY, 65, from Upminster, east London, works as a facilities manager

SMART JACKET + SPORTY TROUSERS

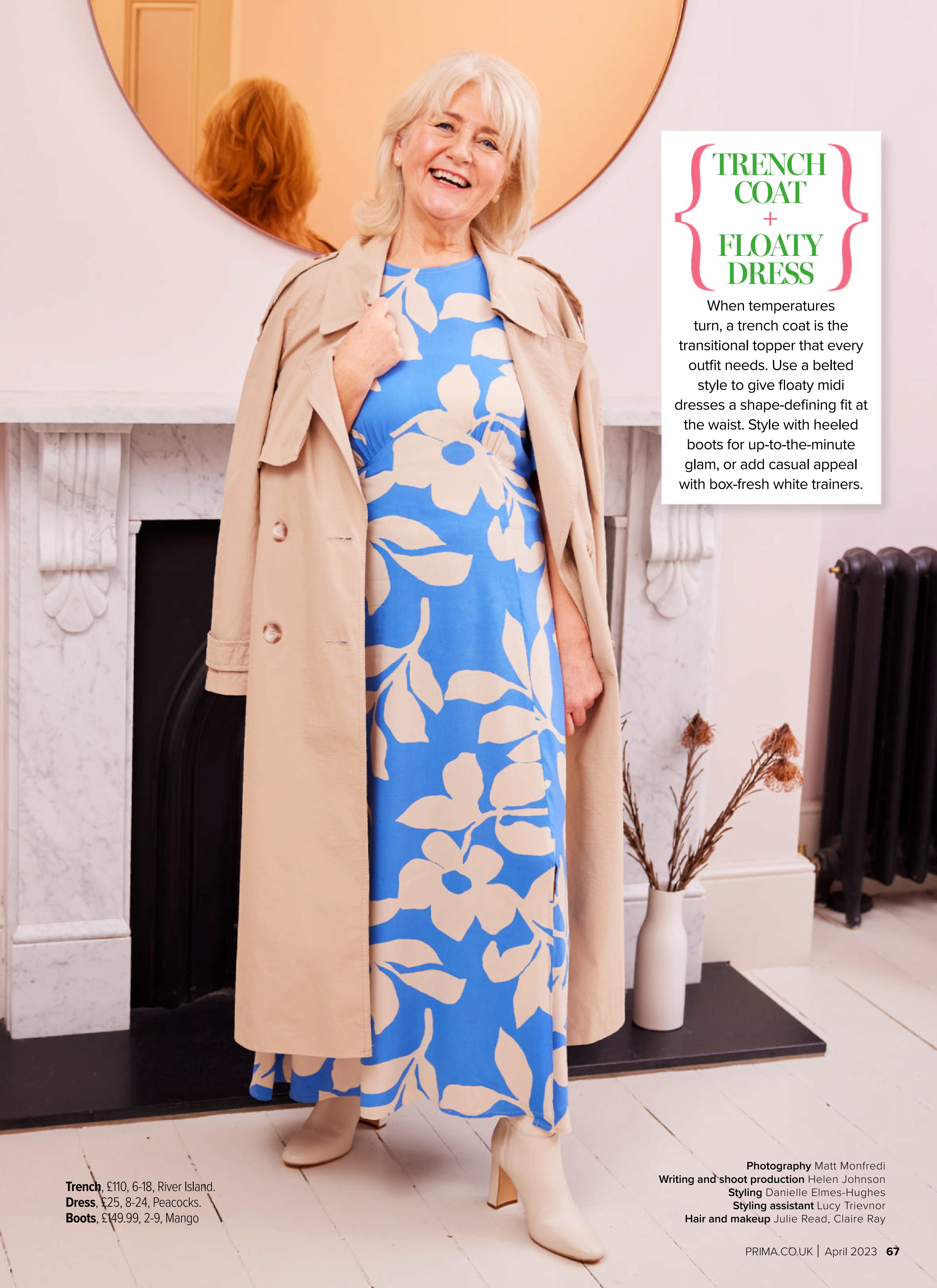
If you haven't embraced them already, you'll want to reacquaint yourself with sporty track pants this season. Try teaming them with crisp cotton shirts and Chanel-style bouclé jackets for a smarter, dressier approach to the sports luxe look.



Dress, £90, 6-16, Paisie.
Necklace, £6.99, H&M.
Bag, £45.99, Mango

BLUE + WHITE

For your shortcut to chic, blue and white is a fresh colour combination that suits every complexion. Whether you mix and match blocks of white and blue or play around with prints and patterns, it's win-win.



TRENCH COAT + FLOATY DRESS

When temperatures turn, a trench coat is the transitional topper that every outfit needs. Use a belted style to give floaty midi dresses a shape-defining fit at the waist. Style with heeled boots for up-to-the-minute glam, or add casual appeal with box-fresh white trainers.

Trench, £110, 6-18, River Island.
Dress, £25, 8-24, Peacocks.
Boots, £149.99, 2-9, Mango

Photography Matt Monfredi
Writing and shoot production Helen Johnson
Styling Danielle Elmes-Hughes
Styling assistant Lucy Trievnor
Hair and makeup Julie Read, Claire Ray

prima 20 OF THE BEST...

buys for your eyes

Hit refresh with *Prima*'s 20 top buys for eyes... and some insider tips to brighten, define and knock years off your look

4%
Vitamin C*
+ Niacinamide
+ Caffeine
+ Banana Powder
VITAMIN C*
EYE CREAM
GARNIER

1

A bright start

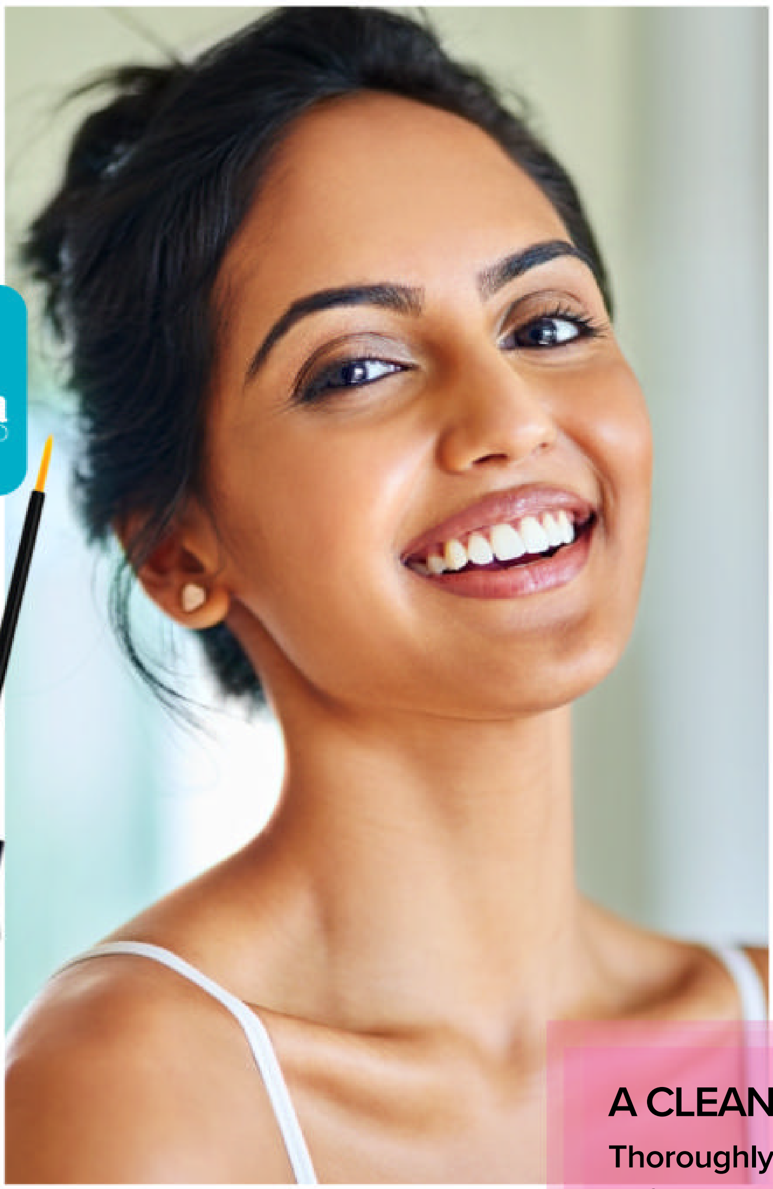
Patting finely ground yellow pigment – also known as banana powder – under tired-looking eyes is a makeup artist's trick for colour-correcting dull skin. It's also the secret ingredient in new **Garnier Vitamin C Brightening Eye Cream**, £10.99, giving a slightly yellow tinge that neutralises blue tones, while vitamin C and niacinamide brighten dullness over time. So clever!

prima
APPROVED
2023
REVITALASH® ADVANCED
eyelash conditioner

2

The *Prima*-approved lash serum

We asked 345 women to put 23 lash growth serums through their paces in a quest to find the top performers. Our clear winner, with an impressive 85/100 points, was **RevitaLash Advanced**, from £99. Our rigorous lab tests showed an average increase in length of 14%.



3

Mascara's new best friend

A lash comb is the tool you didn't know you needed. Not only will lashes look clean, fluttery and separated, but they'll also be less likely to smudge as they dry and will hold a curl better. Comb through after every coat to remove clumps and excess. **UKlash Lash Separator**, £7.99, is quick and easy to use.

ESTĒE LAUDER

4

The pencil to invest in

When **Estée Lauder** says something won't budge, we believe it. **Double Wear 24H Waterproof Gel Eye Pencil**, £22, glides on like a dream and gives enough smudge time before it dries to create an easy smokey eye. We're huge fans of the flattering Espresso brown shade.

GARNIER
SKINACTIVE
NEW FORMULA
Micellar Cleansing
Rose Water All-in-1
DULL & SENSITIVE SKIN
REMOVES MAKE-UP + CLEANSES + GLOW
Enriched with illuminating Rose Water
Face, eyes, lips - No rinse off
HYPOALLERGENIC
Zero residue*
Respectful of skin barrier
Dermatologically tested
RECYCLED PLASTIC BOTTLE

5

To take it all off

It doesn't sting, it smells glorious and it whisks off even the thickest eye makeup in a couple of swipes. We don't think you'll find a better makeup remover than **Garnier SkinActive Micellar Cleansing Rose Water All-in-1**, £6.99.

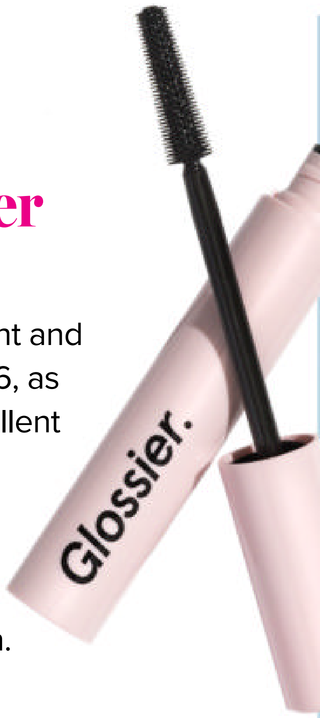
A CLEAN SWEEP

Thoroughly removing your eye makeup before bed is crucial; skipping a wash increases your chances of irritation, inflammation, infection and even eyelash breakage – and the best eye cream in the world can't get to work if it isn't applied on cleansed skin. To catch every last trace of makeup, oil and impurities, without dragging or pulling the delicate skin around the eyes, hold a remover-soaked cotton pad over your eyes for 30 to 60 seconds to allow the makeup to dissolve before swiping away from the outer corners in. ➔

6

A you-but-better mascara

Think of **Glossier**'s lightweight and smudge-proof **Lash Slick**, £16, as mascara's version of an excellent self-tan: you'll instantly look much better but no one would guess you're wearing anything at all. It's a perfect everyday option.



7

A wardrobe of colour

Buttery, easy-to-blend eyeshadows in a good range of neutral and shimmer-free shades, plus some joyful brights for the brave. We also love the way **Barry M Clickable Eyeshadows**, £3.49, slot together to build your own sleek set.

IF YOU DO ONE THING WITH SHADOW…

…make it a cheat's eye contour, says makeup artist Jamie Genevieve, who buffs matte taupe, brown or bronze shadow back and forth into the socket for easy definition and warmth: 'It works really well with a strong lip for balancing the look without fighting it.'

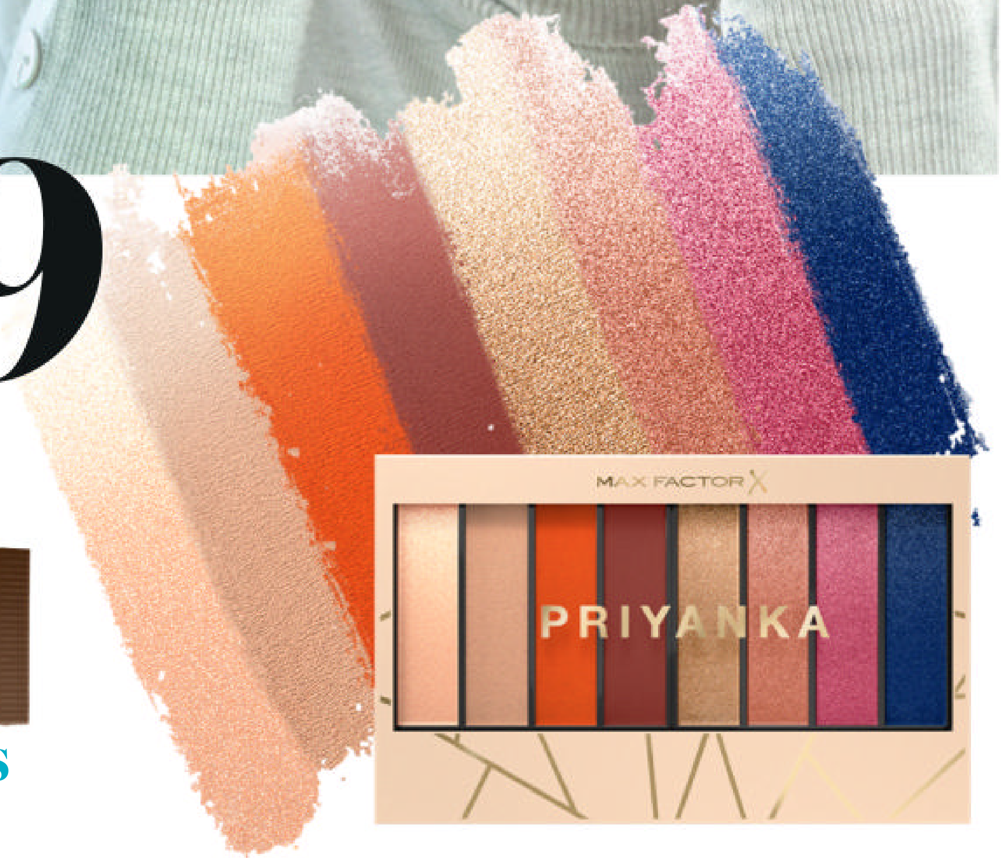
THICK IT.
Stick it!
NYX PROFESSIONAL MAKEUP
THICKENING BROW MASCARA
MASCARA ÉPAISSISSANT POUR LES SOURCILS

8

For one-and-done brows

It tints, it thickens, it holds every hair in place and it comes in seven natural-looking shades that don't transfer. One coat of **NYX Thick It. Stick It! Brow Mascara**, £11, gives a feathery finish; two coats give a fuller effect; or try three for high-impact (but still natural-looking) brows.

9



Must-have palette

The new **Max Factor x Priyanka Masterpiece Eye Palette**, £14.99 (available at Superdrug), really doesn't put a foot wrong. Created with actor Priyanka Chopra Jonas, it looks bold, but we'd wear every single colour all year round.

10

Insider brow definer

Loved by makeup artists for its high-quality pigment and the fact it never needs sharpening, the **Anastasia Beverly Hills Brow Wiz**, £23, has a precision tip at one end for drawing believable-looking single hairs and a spoolie brush at the other for blending colour through the brows.

Nº7
4D Lift & Curl
For lashes that look instantly lifted & curled

13

A lash lift in a tube

Created to mimic the look of a salon lash lift, **No7**'s smart new **4D Lift & Curl Mascara**, £14.95, makes lashes look curled, long and fluttery from all angles. On top of that, the texture is buildable for day-to-night drama that doesn't look flaky or dry.

KREATIVES • KOHL

11

The brush that does everything

The clever synthetic bristles of **Kohl Kreatives Ei8ht Brush**, £8.99, don't hold on to any residue once product has been applied, meaning you can go from concealer to shadow and back again. Truly the only brush you need in your makeup bag.

14

To cool and contour

Try this **UpCircle Eye Roller**, £7.99, to massage in your eye cream and to soothe, cool and de-puff the skin around the eyes during the day. It's a nifty tool from one of our favourite plastic-free beauty brands, and quite addictive to use.

Nº7
Pure Retinol
Eye Cream

12

Lines be gone

We take most wrinkle-minimising claims with a pinch of salt unless retinoids or peptides are involved. **No7 Pure Retinol Eye Cream**, £24.95, has both, pairing retinol with peptide technology to reduce the look of lines, puffiness and dark circles, and using soothing ingredients such as shea butter to minimise irritation caused by retinol.

LASH SENSATIONAL
SKY HIGH

15

For lashes that don't budge

The super-flexible, bendy brush of **Maybelline Lash Sensational Sky High Waterproof Mascara**, £11.99, makes this formula a doddle to apply – and, when you're ready to, it's just as easy to remove.

HOW TO APPLY EYE CREAM

A gentle touch is key when working with the delicate skin around the eyes. Follow these easy steps for foolproof skincare application:

- Always apply eye cream to freshly cleansed skin, before – not after – the rest of your skincare.
- Apply a small amount (the size of a cooked grain of rice) of eye formula to your ring finger.
- Starting from the inner corner of your eye, distribute a few dots along the under-eye, just outside of the orbital bone and working your way outwards.
- Tap the eye cream in gently, being careful not to rub or pull on the skin.
- Wait a minute or two for it to absorb before applying the next step in your routine.

16

Sleep in a jar

We were impressed by **Marks & Spencer Formula Sleep & Replenish Anti-Fatigue Eye Cream**, £17.50, which lightens and brightens under-eye shadows using an active ingredient that breaks down the build-up of a yellow-to-brown pigment known as bilirubin. It's also deeply moisturising, while feeling deceptively light.

17

Gently does it

Watery, itchy eyes the minute British Summer Time kicks in? Then it's the season to try **La Roche-Posay**'s gentle **Toleriane Volume Mascara**, £17.50, which has been specifically formulated for ultra-sensitive eyes prone to streaming (and contact lens wearers).

18

A mascara for impressive length

If lengthening is your top requirement, **L'Oréal Paris Telescopic Lift Mascara**, £12.99, is 'the one'. Its slim, precise brush lets you get right into the roots of the lashes and glides smoothly to the tips with zero clumping.

19

An instant lift

The *Prima* beauty desk is yet to come across a better short-term fix for under-eye puffiness than **SkinLabo Intensive Eye Lift**, £19.90. Tapping on a tiny amount of this serum has an instant tightening and smoothing effect.

20

The ultimate concealer

Lancôme Teint Idole Ultra Wear All Over Concealer, £25, is much more than a cover-up for tired eyes. Yes, it brightens shadows exceptionally well, without caking or settling in creases, but it also functions as an all-over base. Just dab and blend for a fresher-looking face in seconds.

FOUR (SECRET) STEPS TO WAKE UP TIRED EYES

'Eye drops are the most overlooked item in your makeup bag,' says L'Oréal Paris global makeup director and BBC *Glow Up* judge Val Garland. She brings home *Bausch + Lomb Lumify Redness Reliever Eye Drops* from America or orders them online, from £19.61. 'They make eyes look whiter straight away and there's no stinging.'

The second-most overlooked product? 'Eyelash curlers,' says Val. 'You should always curl your lashes, to lift and open up your eyes.'

For soft definition that also makes lashes look thicker, take a black or brown pencil and use it to fill in gaps along the lashline, dotting the colour up and in between the lashes, says Val: 'Then, line all the way along the upper waterline just inside the lashes, getting as close to the roots as you can by looking down into a mirror on a table in front of you. If your pencil has a smudger on the other end, you can use that to soften the line.'

Finally, Val lines the lower waterline with a cream-coloured pencil: 'It's another way to open up the eyes and makes everything look brighter.'

Words Lifestyle beauty team **Photography** Ralf Nau, Roy Burmiston, Getty, Lucky If Sharp

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PRAI
Ageless
Throat & Decolletage Creme
50 mL
crème cou et décolleté
1.7 FL OZ

Self-proclaimed 'neck-xperts' PRAI say that skincare should not stop at your face. And, as this thoughtful and vegan-friendly brand donates a portion of every sale to a range of animal welfare projects via its PRAI for Paws scheme, who says you can't do good while looking good?

A new you

PRAI's Ageless Collection recognises that your neck and decolletage can age up to 20 times faster than your face. With hyaluronic acid and vitamins A and E, Ageless Throat & Decolletage Creme (from £11) restores elasticity and promotes collagen production, leaving you with plumper, healthier-looking skin. Double the benefits by layering it over Ageless Throat & Decolletage Serum (£31.99), and continue the good work with Ageless Throat & Decolletage Night Creme (from £12). This packs an extra punch thanks to two forms of retinol, alongside PRAI's own complex.

Get your glow on

The PRAI MenoGlow range targets the effects that menopause has on the skin. Its 'M Complex', a mix of glow-boosting peptides and soothing seed oils, works to make tired skin look juicy and luminous. Find it in MenoGlow Hot Flush Cool Fix Serum (from £8) to fight flushes and restore radiance.

TERMS & CONDITIONS Go to prima.co.uk/offersapr23 for your promotional code to receive 25% off any full-priced items at praibeauty.co.uk. Offer code can only be used once per customer and cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. UK residents only. Offer cannot be exchanged for cash. Offer is valid between 20 February and 31 March 2023.

My beauty SECRETS

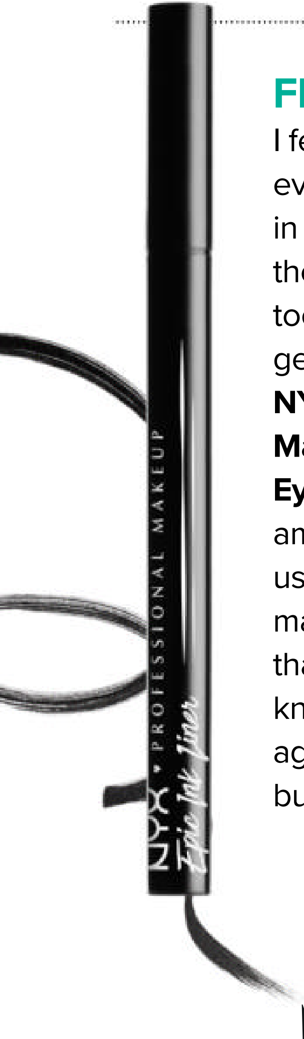
ANGEL STRAWBRIDGE

The *Escape To The Chateau* star and mother of two shares her must-have products for her signature vintage look

Agent Provocateur

DAILY MUST

I never go a day without perfume, it's a non-negotiable for me. I only wear one: Agent Provocateur EDP, £69. I've worn it since it first launched. It's not too sweet – there's a muskiness to it and it has woody, sexy undertones.



FELINE FLICKS

I feel like I've tried every single eyeliner in the world! I often find the brush too flimsy or too hard so you can't get a proper flick, but **NYX Professional Makeup Epic Ink Eye Liner**, £9, is just amazing. I apply it using my freestanding magnifying mirror that lights up – I don't know if this is just an age and eyesight thing, but it's really handy!

L'OCCITANE
EN PROVENCE
MOUSSE-EN GEL
GEL TO-FOAM
nettoyant visage
facial cleanser
infusé au concombre et au thym
infused with cucumber and thyme
tous types de peaux même sensibles
all skin types even sensitive

DEEP CLEAN

I am very diligent about taking my makeup off in the evening and I've been using the **L'Occitane Gel To-Foam Facial Cleanser**, £20, for years because it leaves my face feeling properly clean. Other cleansers often feel too greasy or harsh for my very sensitive skin.

PERFECT POUT

I'm a MAC girl. I've had the same red lip for the last 15 or 20 years. I always use **MAC Prep + Prime Lip**, £20, first, then I use the **MAC Lip Pencil** in **Cherry**, £18, over the top – and that's it. If I'm at home, I'll often have a completely bare face with just a bit of lippy.

ESTĒE LAUDER
Perfectionist Pro
Rapid Brightening Treatment
Ferment²+Vitamin C
Sérum Illuminateur rapide
ELEMIS
PRO-COLLAGEN MARINE CREAM
Anti-wrinkle day cream

CREATURE COMFORTS

I'm a creature of habit and very set in my ways. Two things I always use are **Estée Lauder Perfectionist Pro Serum**, from £68, and **Elemis Pro-Collagen Marine Cream**, from £60. Together, they make my skin feel silky and hydrated. I like to take a moment to massage the moisturiser into my face and neck in the morning.

EYE Q

My eyelashes are very fine, so I wear false lashes a lot. My tip is to never use the glue that comes in the packet! I use MAC Duo Adhesive, £10, and leave it on the lashes for a good five minutes until it's really tacky. Then, when you put them on, they're ready to properly stick.

BASE LAYER

I love it when the sun is shining, but I don't sunbathe – it's just not my thing. I wear the **Erborian CC Crème** with built-in SPF25, £42.50, every day. I follow with **MAC Studio Face and Body Foundation**, £36 – it goes on so easily and doesn't feel too heavy, yet you can build coverage where you want, so it's really versatile.

JO MALONE
LONDON
Lime Basil & Mandarin
Body & Hand Wash
Gel Moussant

SPARK JOY

Anything that smells nice makes me happy (that, and my red lipstick). For a real treat, I love to massage **Jo Malone Lime Basil & Mandarin Body & Hand Wash**, from £36, into my shoulders in the shower; it's absolutely gorgeous! I don't use it every day but, when I do, I smell of it all day.

MAC
MAC
PREP+PRIME

COLOUR CONFIDENCE

I don't go to the hairdresser, I do it all myself. People know me for my red hair, but I'm actually quite grey now. Silver hair can look amazing, but my hair colour has been such a big part of my life and I like that it feels vintage, so I just don't know if I'm ready for that change yet.

• *Visit thechateau.tv for creative and gift ideas*

As told to Rosie Fitzmaurice **Photography** Ian Wallace

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HAPPY CRAFTING!

prima makes

make it · sew it · knit it · give it · love it

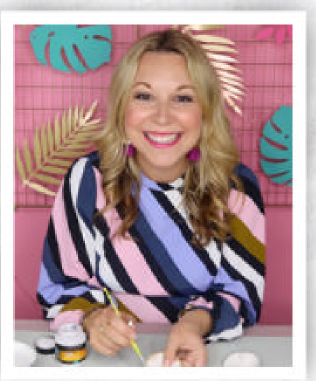
THIS MONTH...

Knit a fun slip-stitch vest top; make decoupage eggs with TV star and top crafter Sara Davies; add delicate floral designs to plain candles; paint a colourful bag with tips from textiles designer Sarah Campbell; and sew an empire-line dress or tunic for spring with our simple pattern.

See over the page for our fab 16-PAGE MAKES SECTION

Celebrate the SEASON

Set the scene for spring with our inspiring makes



'Easter is such a fun time to craft and make the most of the beautiful spring colours. I've come up with some simple but stunning ideas to dress a table or dot around the house. Combine with a collection of posy vases, bursting with the prettiest blooms, and all you have left to do is invite over your family or friends for tea, cake and a good old natter,' says Emily Dawe, founder of craft subscription box Oh Hello Maker.

SENT WITH LOVE

You could use flowers from your garden, a drawing in a book or a photo from a past holiday to help inspire the design for your greetings card.

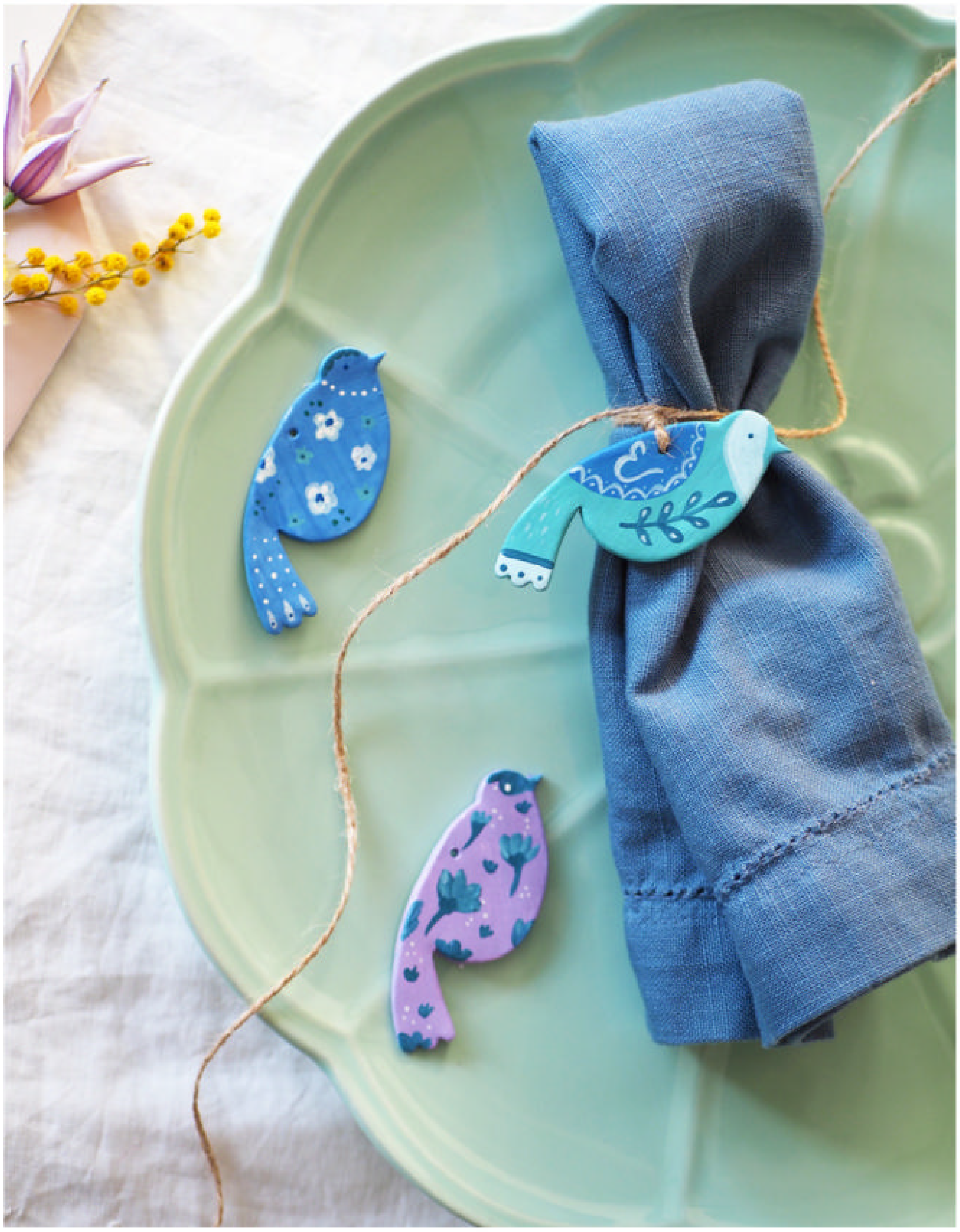
You will need

✿ Flower inspiration ✿ Acrylic paints in blue, lilac, white, green and gold ✿ Medium and fine paintbrushes ✿ Paper ✿ Card ✿ Envelope

To make

① With your inspiration in front of you, have a play around with paint on a spare piece of paper first. This will free you up so you're not so scared when putting paint on your card.
② Once you have decided on your design, start by painting the largest flowers first. For my design, mix up a cornflower blue from blue paint, lilac and white and paint on three flowers.
③ Paint the medium flowers by using a watered-down turquoise mixed with white. Then, paint cobalt blue stems when the petals are still wet so the colours merge slightly.
④ Paint simple leaf shapes using a watered-down jade green. Once these have dried, use the tip of a fine paintbrush to add the veins and stems with the same jade green.
⑤ Add smaller flowers and little round berries. When these are dry, add dots of a darker colour to the centre or edges.
⑥ Finally, when everything is dry, you can add gold to the centre of the large flowers and add a few dots here and there. Alternatively, use a gold pen.
⑦ Complete by choosing a pretty coloured envelope – you could always add a little flower to this, too!

Prefer to use watercolours? Cut down a piece of watercolour paper to A5 and fold it in half.



HOW TWEET

These cute little clay birds will make the sweetest addition to your table. Paint them in colours that complement your scheme, add your guests' names or initial, then tie them on to napkins or hang them from an Easter tree.

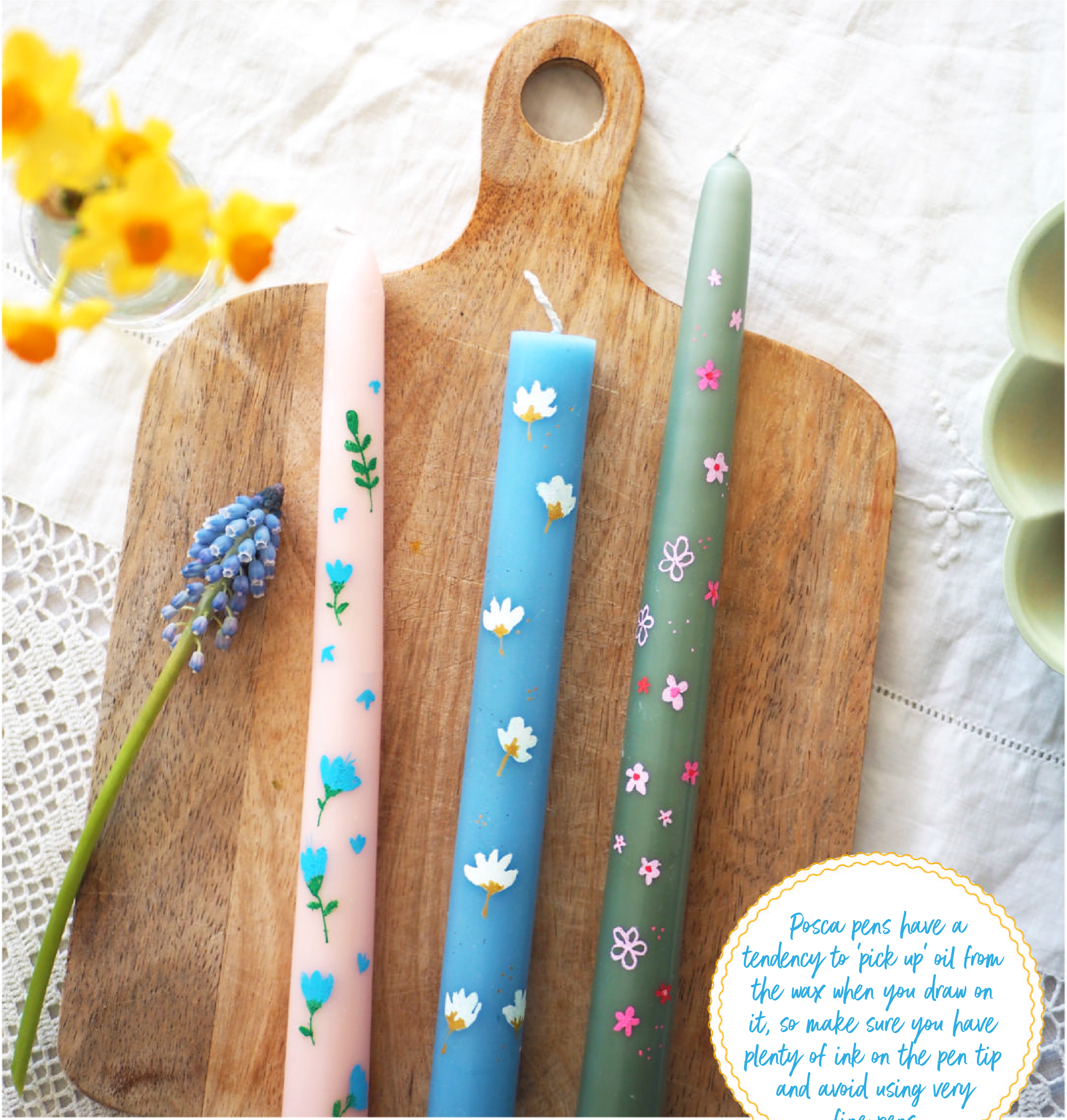
You will need

✿ Air drying clay – we used Das ✿ Piece of card ✿ Rolling pin ✿ Bird cutter ✿ Cocktail stick ✿ Sandpaper ✿ Acrylic paints ✿ Medium and fine paintbrushes ✿ Ribbon or twine

To make

① Take out a piece of the clay and place it on to a piece of card. Roll the clay out so it's roughly 3-4mm thick.
② Take the bird cutter and press it down firmly into the clay, then peel the excess away from around the edge.
③ Hold the cutter in one hand and, pressing it down quite firmly, move the cutter side to side over the surface of the card to get rid of any excess clay.
④ Carefully push the bird shape out of the cutter with your finger. Add a hole towards the top edge with a cocktail stick.
⑤ Leave to dry overnight. When the clay has changed from grey to white, sand all around the edges and smooth out any rough parts on the back.
⑥ Using our photograph as a guide or adding your own design, begin painting the bird. It's best to add a solid colour all over first, leave it to dry, then add some detail using the fine paintbrush.
⑦ When the paint is dry, thread through ribbon or twine and attach to a napkin.

• *Eco bird cutter available to buy as a set at Oh Hello Maker (ohhellomaker.com)*



Posca pens have a tendency to 'pick up' oil from the wax when you draw on it, so make sure you have plenty of ink on the pen tip and avoid using very fine pens.

SHINE BRIGHT

Add delicate floral designs to plain candles with the aid of some Posca pens and a little imagination.

You will need

✿ **Posca pens** ✿ **Paper**
✿ **A selection of candles***

To make

① Start by drawing some designs on to a piece of paper first, so you know exactly the design you want to achieve on your candle.

② Shake up your Posca pen, then take off the lid and press the nib down several times on to a piece of paper until the ink starts to flow.

③ Lay your candle down on a flat surface – you may want to place something on either side of the candle to prevent it from rolling around. Begin creating your design, pressing the pen down on to paper again when the ink stops flowing. When you have finished with the first colour, leave the ink to dry completely before applying a second colour.

④ Add a second colour to your design – this might be enough (we created the blue candle, pictured, with just white and gold).

*Never leave a lit candle unattended

IT'S A CRACKER!

These aren't ones you pull. Oh, no! Instead, unwrap them like they're presents. They make lovely treats for guests and they're reusable, too!

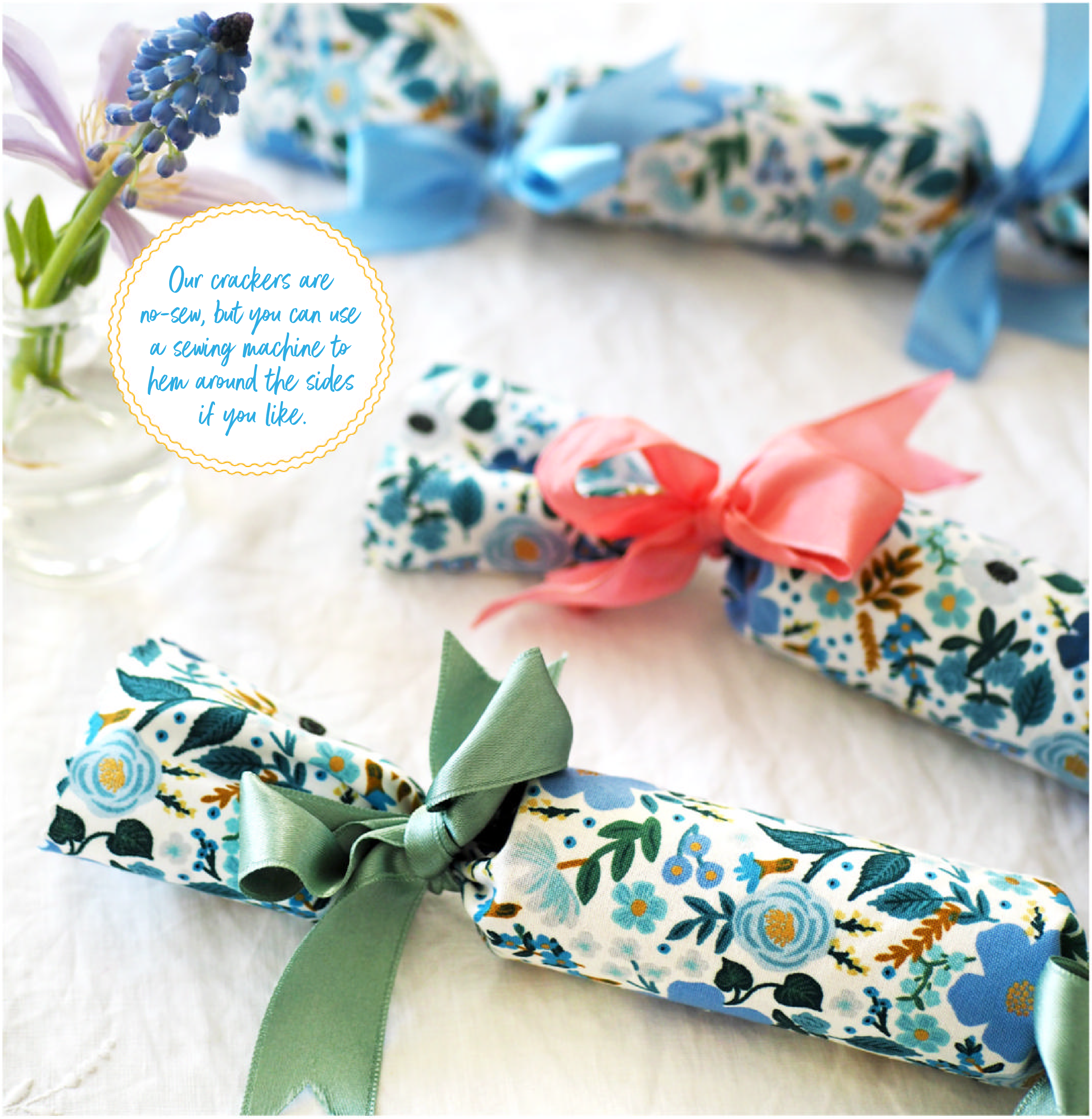
You will need

- Pinking shears
- Cotton fabric
- Toilet rolls – 1 per cracker
- Fabric glue or hot glue gun
- Little gifts
- Ribbon

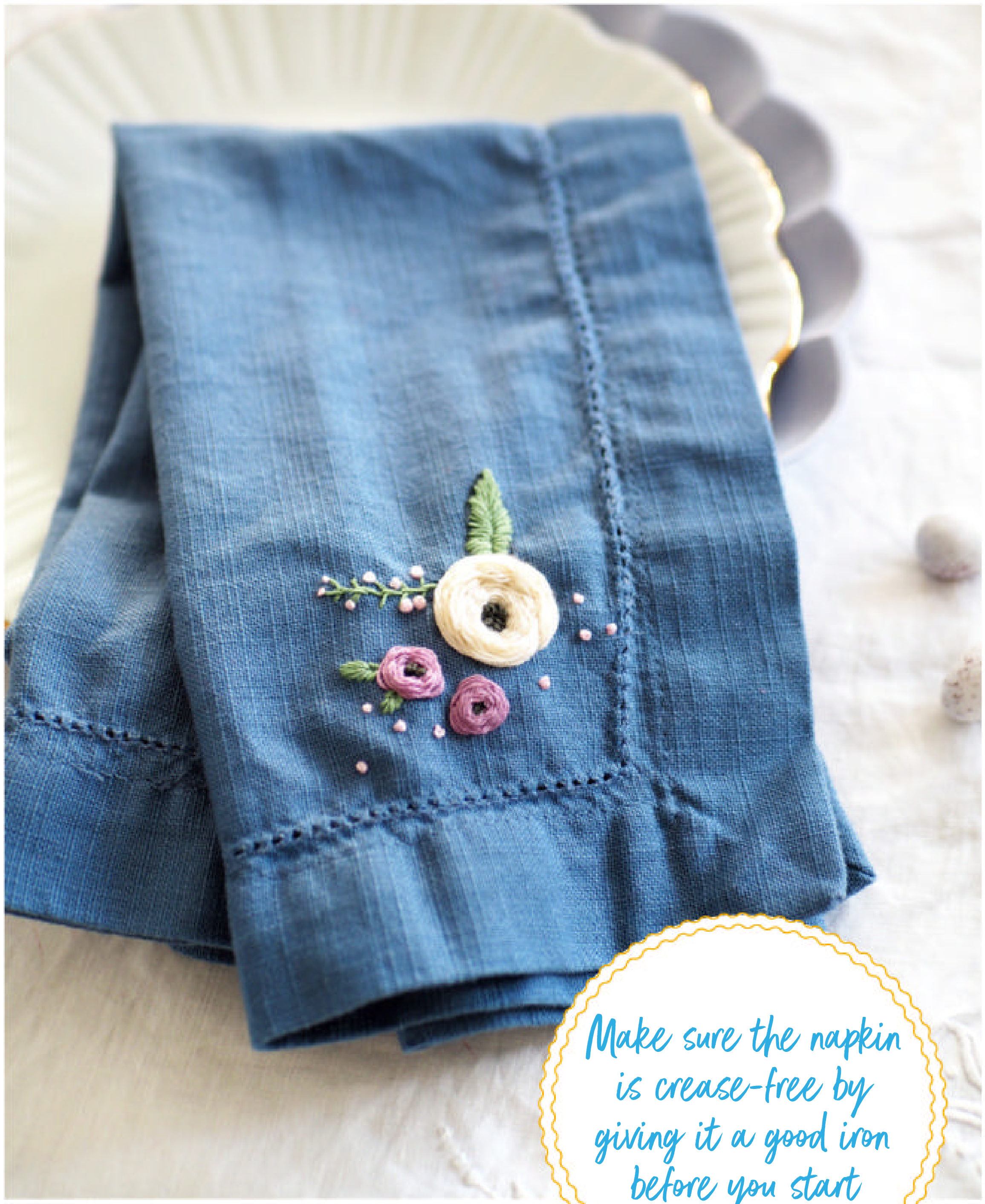
To make

1. Cut a 20 x 33cm piece of cotton fabric with pinking shears – double check this measurement with your toilet roll.
2. Position the toilet roll in the middle of the fabric along a long edge and use a little fabric glue (or a glue gun) to secure it in place. Pop a little gift inside, along with any other treats (joke, affirmation, silly hat...).
3. Have two lengths of ribbon ready, roughly 35cm each. Roll the toilet roll up in the fabric, pinch the fabric together at one end of the toilet roll and tie a bow with the ribbon. Do the same on the other side.

• *Wild Rose fabric, from a selection, Good Fabric (goodfabric.co.uk)* ➜



Our crackers are no-sew, but you can use a sewing machine to hem around the sides if you like.



Make sure the napkin is crease-free by giving it a good iron before you start stitching.

STITCH IN TIME

With just a few simple embroidery stitches, you can transform a plain napkin into something beautiful.

You will need

✿ **Threader** ✿ **Embroidery needle**
✿ **Embroidery thread in white, lilac, deep grey, green and pale pink**
✿ **Scissors** ✿ **Cotton napkin**
✿ **Erasable fabric pen – not essential**

To make

① You can either stitch this design freehand or draw on the placement of the flowers with an erasable fabric pen first as a guide.
② Thread your needle with three strands of the white thread. Add five straight stitches to create the outline of the large flower, then work woven wheel stitch to create a raised rose.
③ Create two smaller roses in lilac, using just two strands of embroidery thread.
④ Fill the flowers with French knots using the deep grey thread. The larger flower has seven knots, while the smaller flowers just have one or two.
⑤ Thread your needle with three strands of green embroidery thread. Then, using fishbone stitch, work the large leaf and the two smaller leaves.
⑥ Still using three strands of green thread, work the branch with stem stitch. Then, work a single straight stitch for each twig.
⑦ Create little French knots at the end of each tiny branch with three strands of pale pink thread, wrapping the thread around the needle one or two times to add some variety.
⑧ Finally, add a few French knots around the design to finish off.

• For help with the stitches, check out Emily's guide at ohhellomaker.com/pages/box-15

FLOWER POWER

Honeycomb flowers make a lovely table setting, as you can tuck in a card with your guest's name. Alternatively, add string or ribbon to the top and hang them up as floral decorations.

You will need

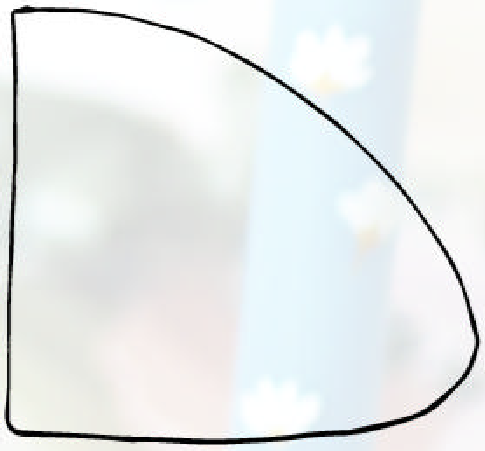
✿ **Thin piece of card** ✿ **Pencil**
✿ **Scissors** ✿ **A4 paper in a pretty colour** ✿ **Glue stick** ✿ **Paperclip**

To make

① Trace off the template (right) on to a piece of thin card and cut out.
② Concertina fold a piece of A4 paper, making sure the height of the folded paper is bigger than the template.
③ Keeping the paper folded up, position the flat edge of the template against the folded edge of paper and draw around it several times. Cut out. Continue folding papers and cutting out folded shapes until you have at least 30.
④ Take the first folded shape and apply a thin line of glue from the middle of the folded edge to the middle of the curved edge. Then place the next shape on top, lining it up.
⑤ Again, apply a thin line of glue from the middle of the folded edge to the middle of the curved edge, then place on the next shape. Keep repeating this process with all 30-plus shapes – you will create something that looks like a mini book.
⑥ Open up the 'mini book' and apply a line of glue either side of where you've applied your one line of glue on the previous shapes.
⑦ When everything is glued, the papers will alternate between one line of glue centrally, then two lines of glue. Leave to dry.
⑧ Carefully open up the papers – you will see the honeycomb effect appear. If any parts are glued together by accident, gently tease them apart.
⑨ Apply a central line of glue to the final side then press the two pieces together to adhere. Use a paperclip to hold them in place as they dry.
⑩ Finally, write your guest's name on to a small piece of card, then tuck it into the flower.

Feature and photography Emily Dawe; ohhellomaker.com

TEMPLATE



The key to creating the perfect flower is to apply very thin, precise lines of glue.

- Discover all sorts of inspiring craft kits (ideal for beginners!) and the latest workshop dates at ohhellomaker.com. To get 10% off your first order, visit **prima.co.uk/offersapr23**. Offer ends 31 March

EXCLUSIVE DESIGN FOR *PRIMA*

Fun with FLORALS!

What says spring more than a pretty empire-line dress or tunic? And best of all, it's a super-simple pattern

Flattering, floaty and totally versatile, this tea dress and tunic has adjustable ties for the perfect fit. You can mix and match prints, pair the dress with a rollneck and boots for cooler days or wear with trainers for a modern daytime look. The tunic looks great in a ditsy floral pattern with smart jeans or, for a change, try a crisp white option or even stripes for a regatta look.

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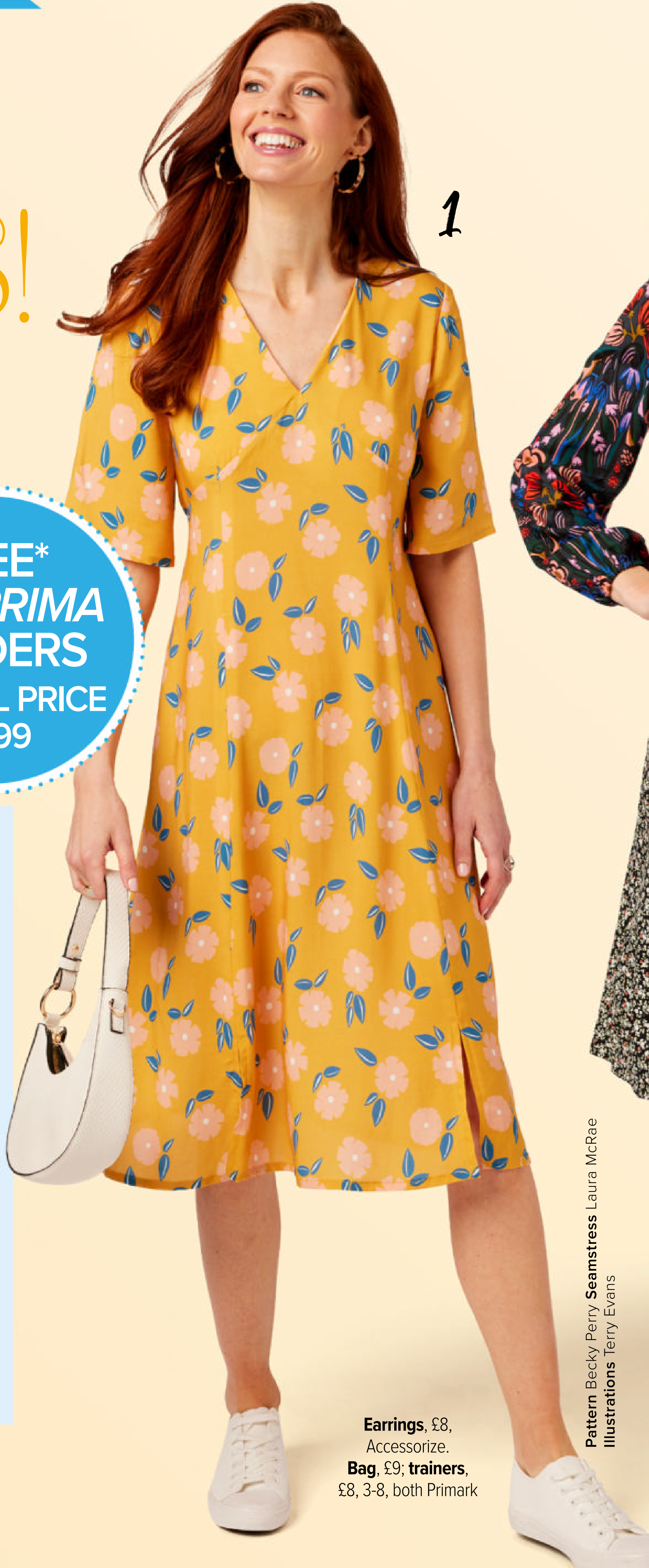

Earrings, £8, Accessorize. **Bag**, £9; **trainers**, £8, 3-8, both Primark

Pattern Becky Perry **Seamstress** Laura McRae **Illustrations** Terry Evans

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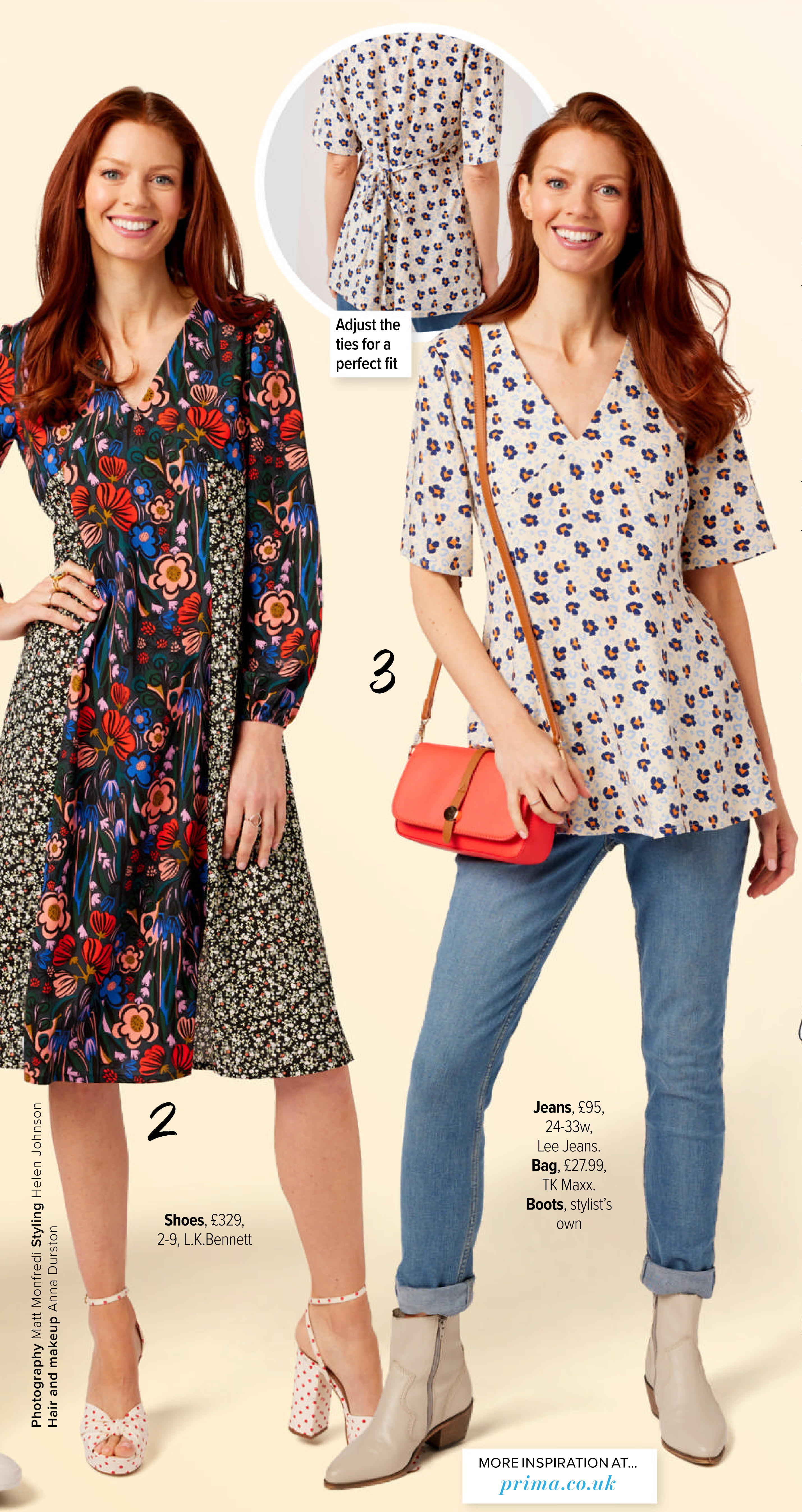


Adjust the ties for a perfect fit

Shoes, £329, 2-9, L.K.Bennett

Jeans, £95, 24-33w, Lee Jeans. **Bag**, £27.99, TK Maxx. **Boots**, stylist's own

Photography Matt Monfredi **Styling** Helen Johnson
Hair and makeup Anna Durston

Need to know

SIZES 6-24 Sew a soft empire-line dress or tunic with ties for fitting. Choose from a gathered three-quarter-length sleeve or simple elbow-length sleeve and either a below-the-knee dress or a tunic length, with or without slits.

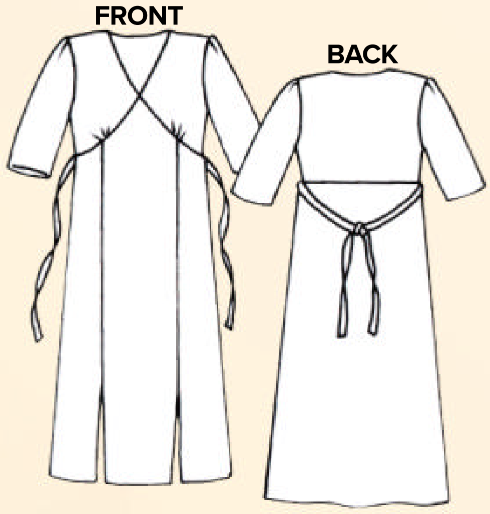
FABRICS We used yellow-based dandelion floral for option 1, dark-based mix-and-match florals for option 2 and a modern leopard print for option 3.

OPTION 1: Yellow floral in viscose from Lamazi Fabrics.

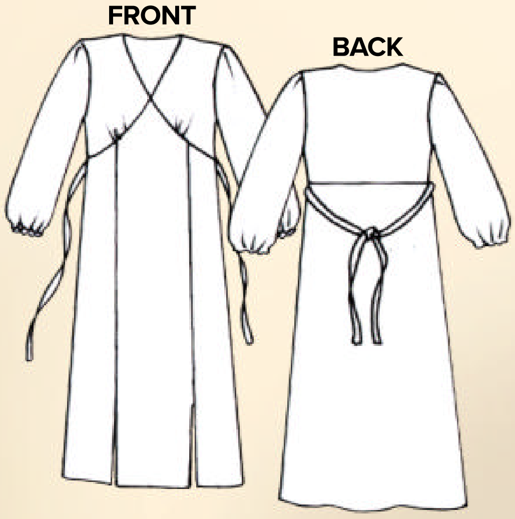
OPTION 2: Floral rayon and cotton mix from Lamazi Fabrics and Fabric Land.

OPTION 3: Leopard in viscose poplin from Lamazi Fabrics.

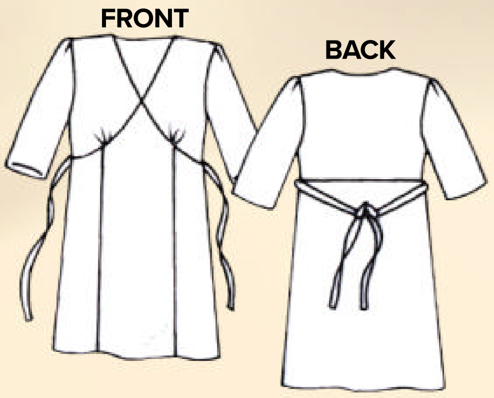
OPTION 1



OPTION 2



OPTION 3



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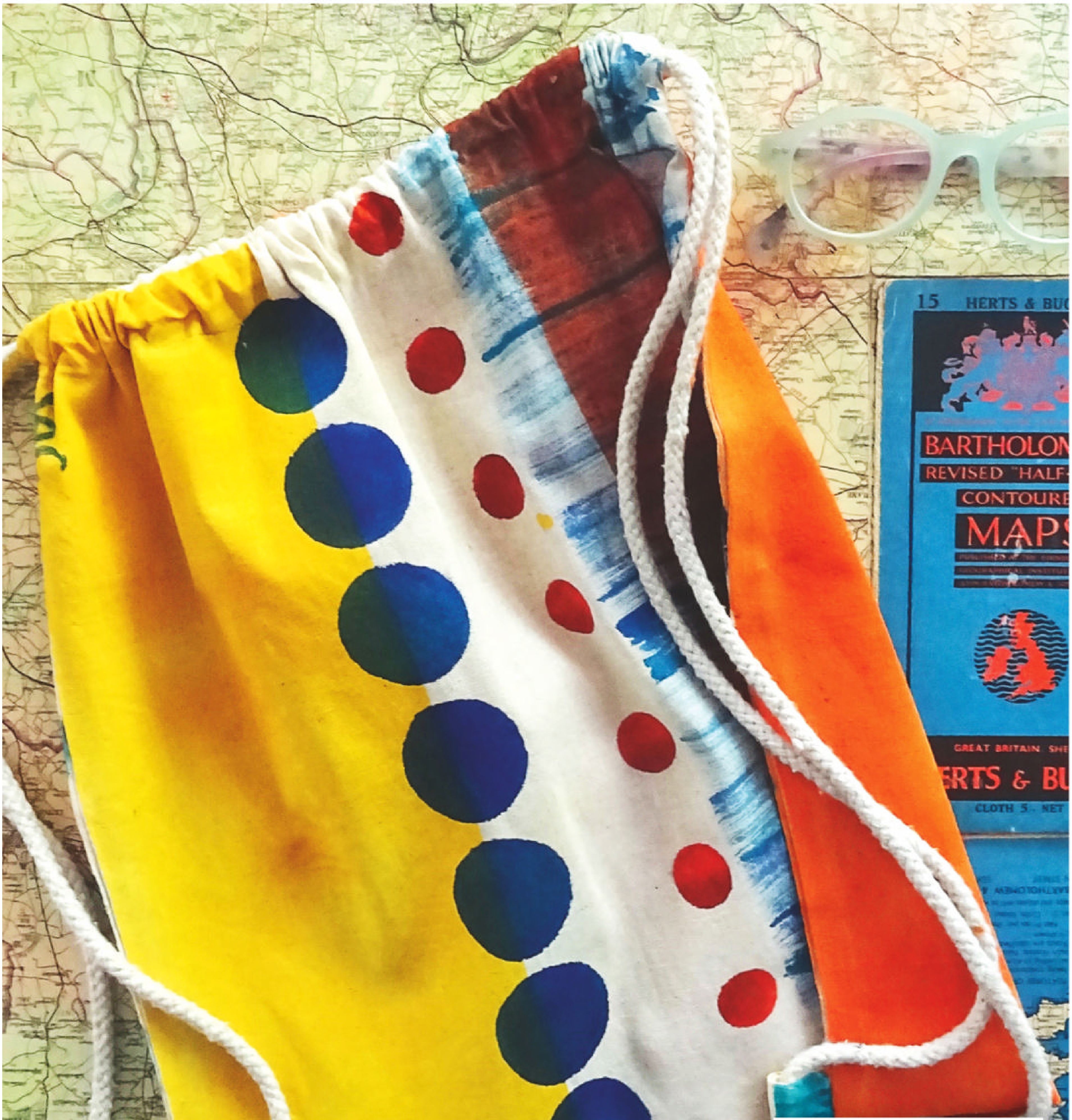
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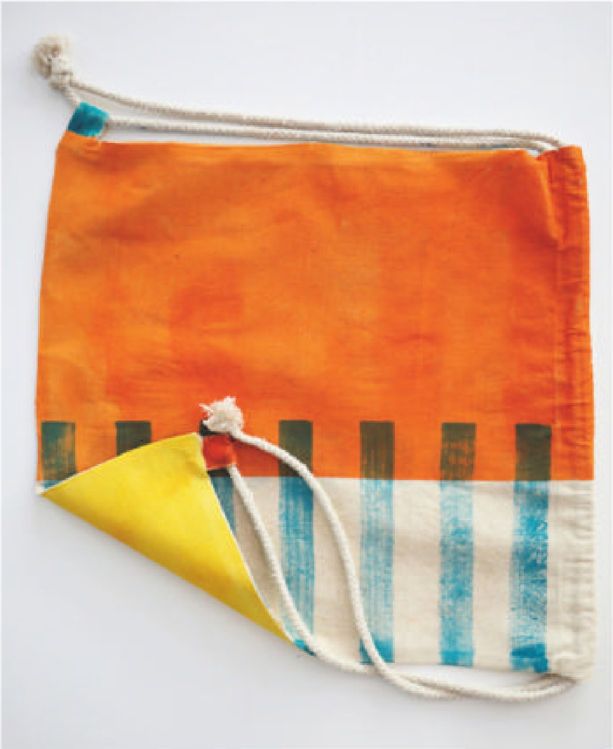
Bags of JOY

A fabulous new book by textiles designer Sarah Campbell brings lots of ideas on applying colour and pattern to fabric. Here's how to paint a ready-made bag...

BOLD & BRIGHT

'For this project, I chose a ready-made cotton bag that can be worn over one shoulder as a duffel bag or on the back,' says renowned textiles designer and author Sarah. 'I had the design in mind from the start – mainly orange one side and yellow the other, but both sharing secondary colours.' Here's how to make Sarah's design...



You will need

✿ Pencils ✿ Paper ✿ Auto-fade pen ✿ Fabric paints/inks ✿ Palette/pots ✿ Iron ✿ Ready-made cotton drawstring bag ✿ Paper to line the bag ✿ A board or surface on which to pin the bag ✿ Pushpins or map pins ✿ Masking tape or Tesa tape ✿ Brushes: foam and bristle ✿ Hairdryer (optional)

Method

① You might like to draw a plan of your design before you start, remembering that the back and the front offer the opportunity for difference – complement or contrast, it's up to you. If you want to draw on the fabric itself, be sure to use an auto-fade pen.

> 'The balance between colour and mark is crucial in even the simplest of patterns.'

② Plan and prepare your colours in a palette or small containers. They could be similar to the bag shown here or adapted to your taste, remembering that when painting one colour over another you need dark to go over light to read well.

③ Iron the bag and line it with paper so that the paint doesn't leak through from one side to the other.

④ Pin the bag flat to the board. You are now ready to paint the first area of colour (for me, the orange) with a wide brush.

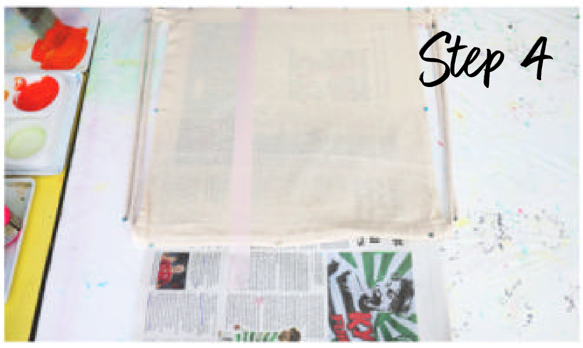
⑤ Run tape down the bag to give the colour a sharp, neat edge. I find this bag itself such a tidy little rectangle that I want my design to complement it.

⑥ When the paint is dry (hairdryer at the ready!), lift the tape and place it in a different position to give another neat edge to paint against. This time, make blue textured horizontal stripes with a narrower flat brush. Each time, the size and shape of the brush is integral to the marks being made.

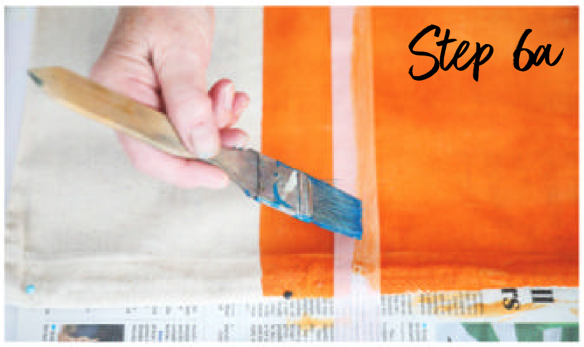
⑦ On the other side, repeat a similar process (using different proportions) for the yellow area. This side is a little more elaborate. Use a large foam dabber for the blue dots – I like them landing half and half over the yellow.

⑧ To echo the front, paint another rust-coloured band and run blue textured stripes across it, again using the narrow bristle brush. Add smaller rust-coloured dots to dance down the bag.

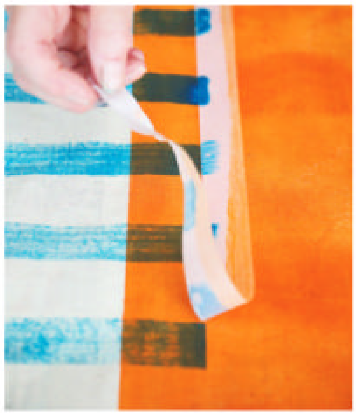
⑨ The last detail is to paint the little tabs that hold the cord: blue one side, rust the other. The pattern on this bag is an uncomplicated and clear design; nevertheless the balance between colour and mark is crucial in even the simplest of patterns.



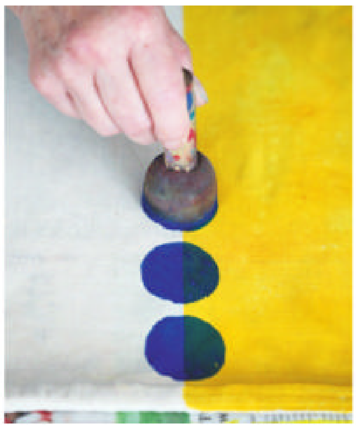
Step 4



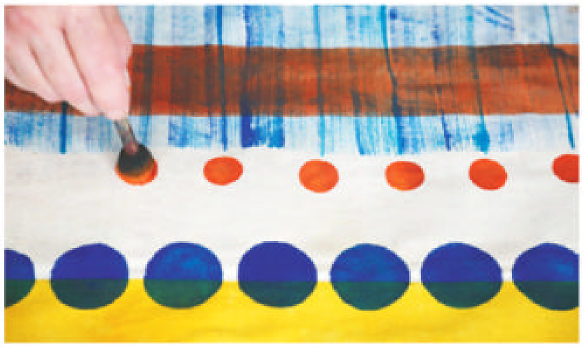
Step 6a



Step 6b



Step 7



Step 8

HAND-PAINTED TEXTILES
A Practical Guide to the Art of Painting on Fabric
Sarah Campbell

- *Hand-painted Textiles: A Practical Guide To The Art Of Painting On Fabric (Herbert Press) by Sarah Campbell is out now; sarahcampbelldesigns.com*

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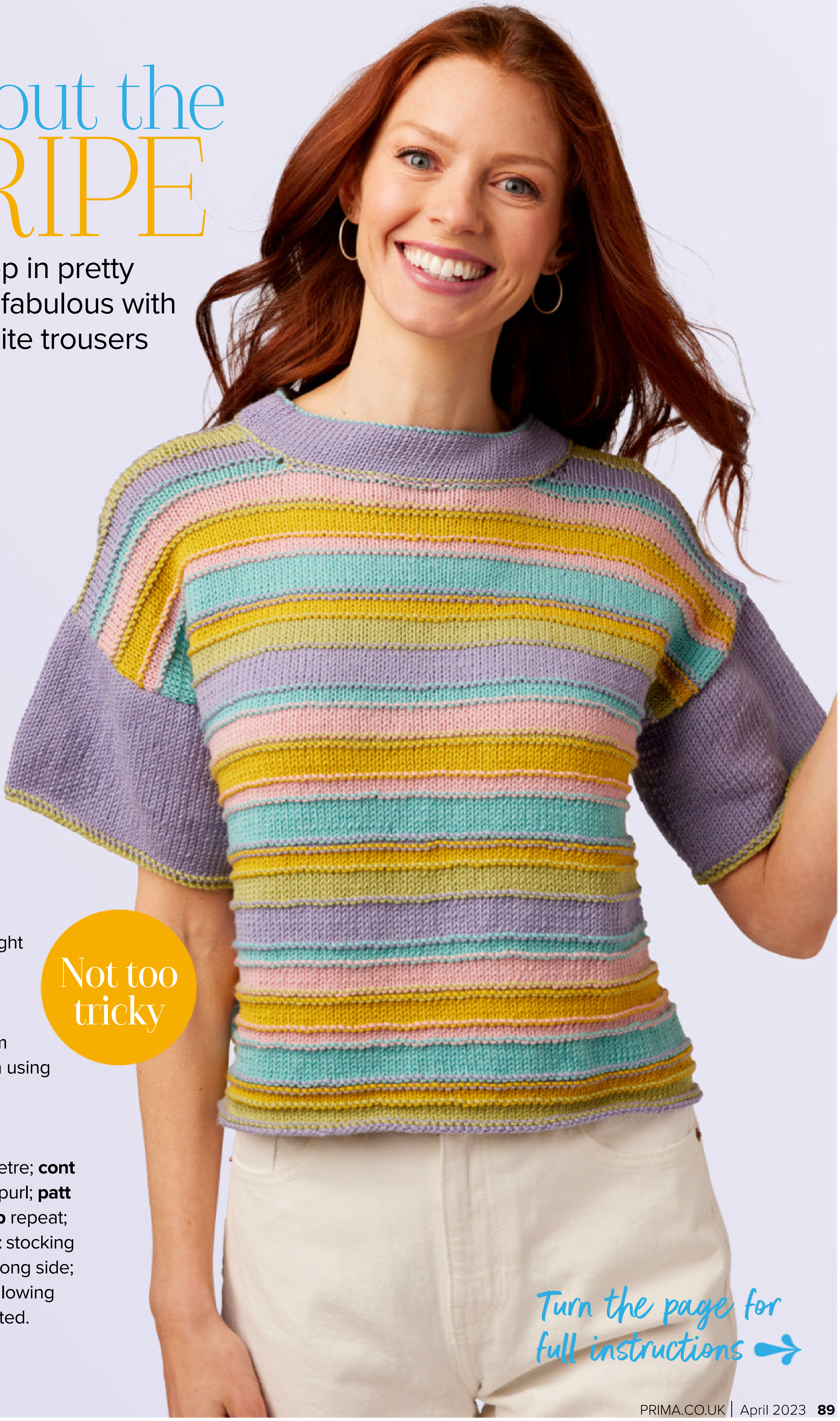
EXCLUSIVE DESIGN FOR *PRIMA*

All about the STRIPE

This fun top in pretty pastels looks fabulous with jeans or white trousers



Measurements

To fit chest: 81-86(91-97:102-107:112-117:122-127)cm.
Actual chest: 106(116:126:136:146)cm.
Full length: 56 (57:58:59:60)cm.

Materials

- 3(4:4:4:5) 50g balls Debbie Bliss Rialto DK (100% Merino Wool) in Wisteria 102 (A); 2(2:2:2:2) 50g balls in Apple 9 (B); 2(2:2:2:2) 50g balls in Mustard 99 (C); 2(2:3:3:3) 50g balls in Sea Green 81 (D); 2(2:2:2:2) 50g balls in Vintage Pink 66 (E).
- Pair each of 4.5mm straight knitting needles.

Tension

20 sts and 28 rows to 10cm square over stocking stitch using 4.5mm needles.

Abbreviations

Beg beginning; **cm** centimetre; **cont** continue; **g** gram; **k** knit; **p** purl; **patt** pattern; **rem** remaining; **rep** repeat; **RS** right side; **st** stitch; **st st** stocking stitch; **tog** together; **WS** wrong side; * repeat the instructions following the single asterisk as directed.

Not too tricky

Turn the page for full instructions →

Stripe pattern

Row 1 (WS): Using B, knit.

Rows 2-6: Work 5 rows in st st, beginning with a K row.

Row 7 (WS): Using C, knit.

Rows 8-10: Work 3 rows in st st, beginning with a K row.

Rows 11 and 12 (WS): Using A, knit 2 rows.

Row 13 (WS): Using D, knit.

Rows 14-20: Work 7 rows in st st, beginning with a K row.

Row 21 (WS): Using E, knit.

Rows 22-24: Work 3 rows in st st, beginning with a K row.

Row 25 (WS): Using C, knit.

Rows 26-30: Work 5 rows in st st, beginning with a K row.

Rows 31 and 32 (WS): Using B, knit 2 rows.

Row 33 (WS): Using E, knit.

Rows 34-38: Work 5 rows in st st, beginning with a K row.

Row 39 (WS): Using D, knit.

Rows 40-42: Work 3 rows in st st, beginning with a K row.

Row 43 (WS): Using A, knit.

Rows 44-50: Work 7 rows in st st, beginning with a K row.

These 50 rows **set** the pattern repeat.

Front and Back (both alike)

Using 4.5mm needles and A, cast on 106(116:126:136:146) sts.

Knit 1 row.

Cont in stripe pattern (throughout), beginning with Row 1 until work measures 51(52:53:54:55)cm from cast on edge, ending after a WS row.

Shape neck

Next row (RS): Patt 38(42:46:50:54), turn and leave the rem 68(74:80:86:92) sts on a holder.

Shape left neck

Next row (WS): Patt2tog, patt to end. 37(41:45:49:53) sts.

Next row: Patt to last 2 sts, patt2tog. 36(40:44:48:52) sts.

Next row: Patt to end.

Rep last 2 rows twice more. 34(38:42:46:50) sts.

Work a further 2 rows straight in patt.

Shape shoulders

Next row (RS): Cast off 11(12:14:14:16) sts, patt to end. 23(26:28:32:34) sts.

Next row: Patt to end.

Next row (RS): Cast off 11(13:14:16:17) sts, patt to end. 12(13:14:16:17) sts.

Next row: Patt to end.

Cast off rem 12(13:14:16:17) sts.

Shape right neck

With RS facing, working on rem 68(74:80:86:92) sts, slip centre 30(32:34:36:38) sts on to a holder, patt to end. 38(42:46:50:54) sts.

Next row (WS): Patt to last 2 sts, patt2tog. 37(41:45:49:53) sts.

Next row: Patt2tog, patt to end. 36(40:44:48:52) sts.

Next row: Patt to end.

Rep last 2 rows twice more. 34(38:42:46:50) sts.

Work a further 3 rows straight in patt.

Shape shoulders

Next row (WS): Cast off 11(12:14:14:16) sts, patt to end. 23(26:28:32:34) sts.

Next row: Patt to end.

Next row (WS): Cast off 11(13:14:16:17) sts, patt to end. 12(13:14:16:17) sts.

Next row: Patt to end.

Cast off rem 12(13:14:16:17) sts.

Sleeves (both alike)

Using 4.5mm needles and B, cast on 84(92:100:108:116) sts.

Knit 1 row.

Change to A, knit 1 row.

Cont in st st, beginning with a knit row, until sleeve measures 14cm from cast on edge, ending after a WS row.

Cast off.

Neckband

Join right shoulder seam.

Using 4.5mm needles and B, pick up and knit 12 sts evenly down neck, knit across 30(32:34:36:38) sts left on holder, pick up and knit 12 sts evenly up to shoulder seam, pick up and knit 12 sts evenly down neck, knit across 30(32:34:36:38) sts left on holder, pick up and knit 12 sts evenly up to shoulder seam. 108(112:116:120:124) sts.

Break off B.

Row 1 (WS): Using A, knit 1 row.

Rows 2-12: Work 11 rows in st st beginning with a K row.

Rows 13 and 14: Using D, knit 2 rows.

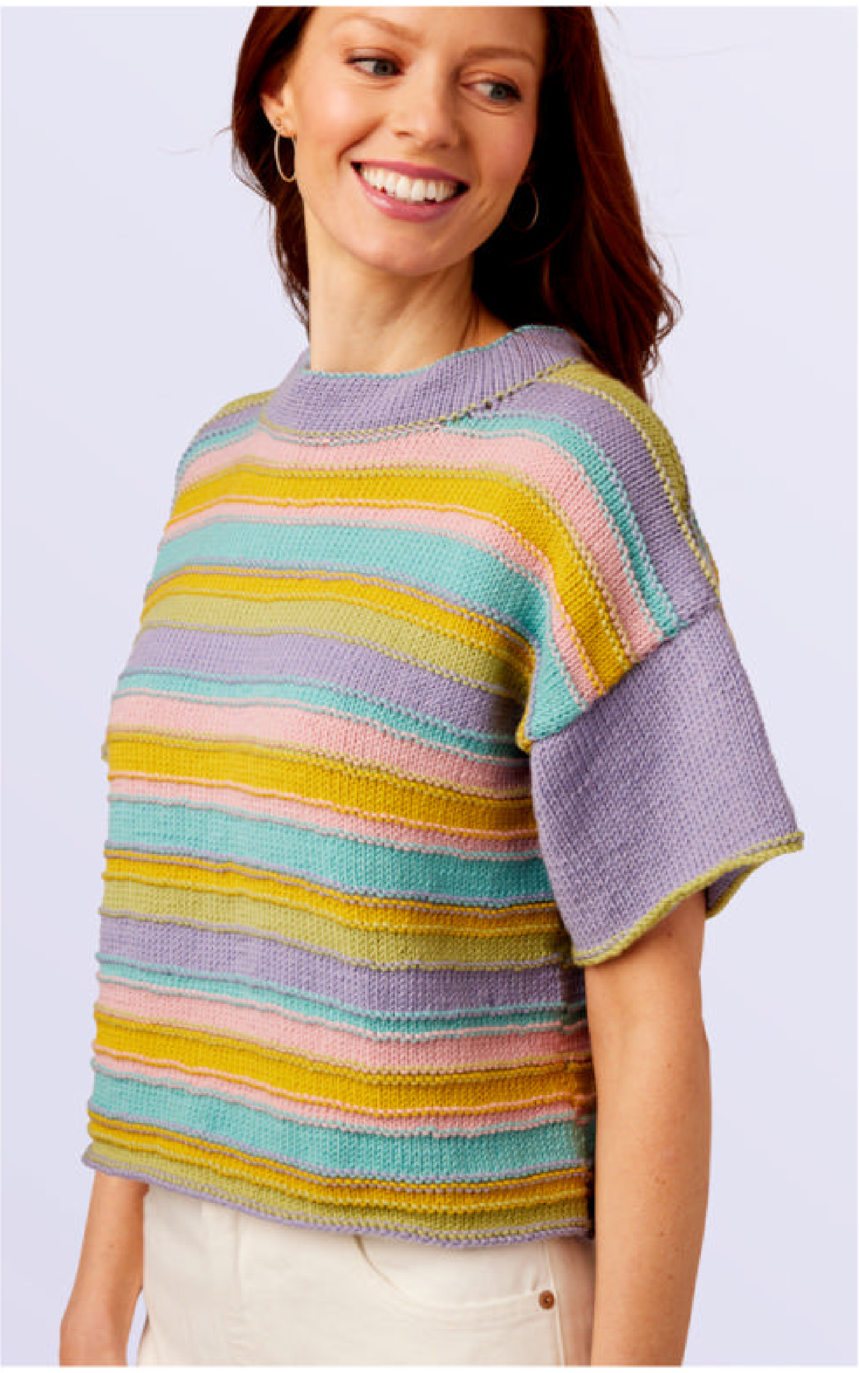
Row 15: Using A, knit.

Rows 16-26: Work 11 rows in st st beginning with a K row.

Cast off.

Making up

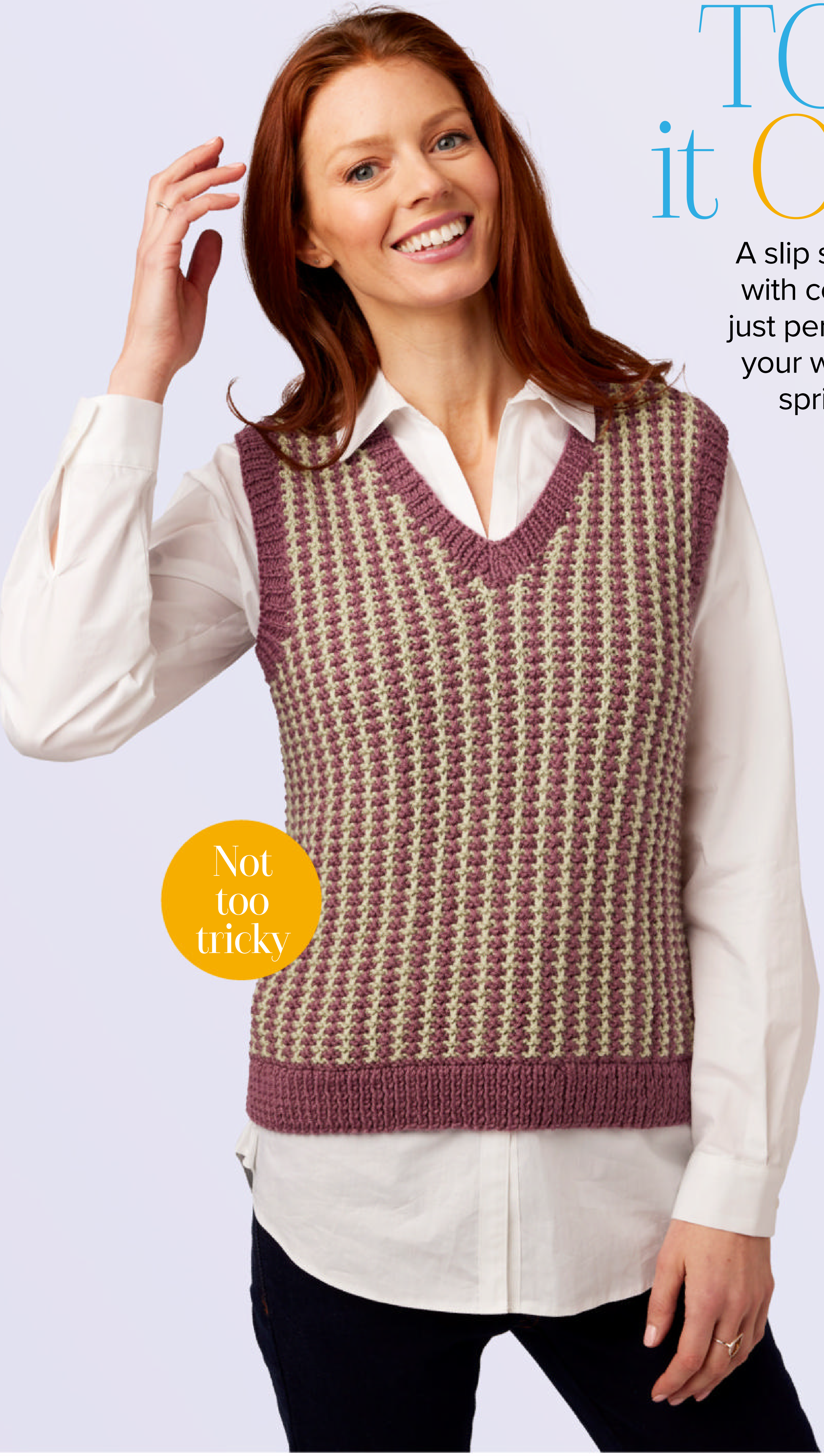
Join left shoulder seam. Fold neckband in half to WS and whipstitch to pick up edge. Measure 22(23:25:26:29)cm down from either side of shoulder seam on front and back and place a marker to mark armholes. Insert sleeves in position by folding sleeves in half and placing the fold to the shoulder seam; sew in position between markers. Join side and sleeve seams. Weave in ends. Pin your garment out to the size stated in the pattern, cover with a damp cloth and leave to dry.



EXCLUSIVE DESIGN FOR *PRIMA*

TOP it OFF

A slip stitch vest top with contrast ribs is just perfect for giving your wardrobe that spring feeling



Not too tricky

Measurements

To fit chest: 81-86(91-97:102-107:112-117:122-127)cm.
Actual chest: 100 (108:121:129:142)cm.
Full length: 56 (58:60:62:64)cm.

Materials

- 6(7:7:8:9) 50g balls Debbie Bliss Cashmerino Aran (55% Merino Wool, 33% Acrylic, 12% Cashmere) in Heather 46 (A); 4(4:5:5:5) 50g balls in Willow 76 (B).
- Pair each of 4.5mm and 5mm straight knitting needles.
- Stitch holder.
- Safety pin.
- Stitch markers.

Tension

19 sts and 42 rows to 10cm square over slip stitch stitch using 5mm needles.

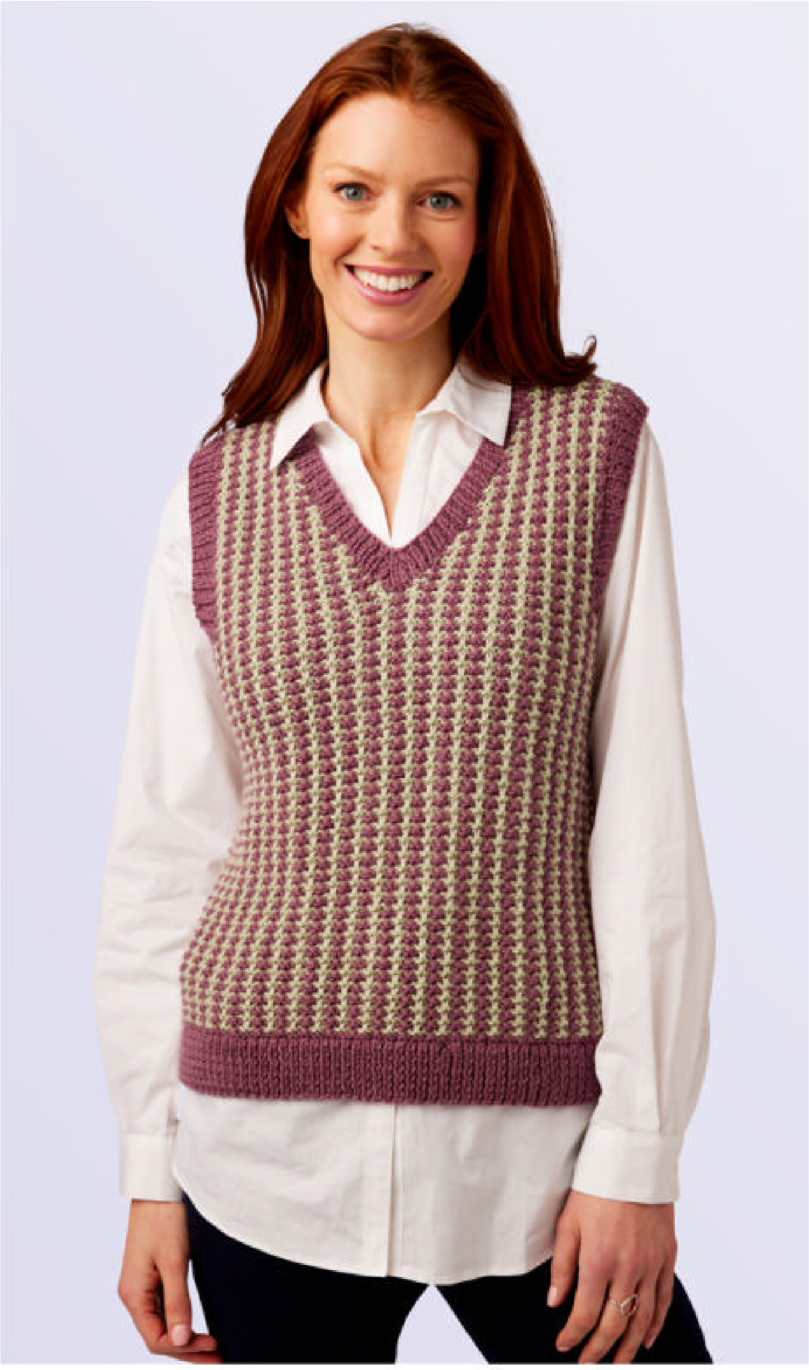
Turn the page for full instructions

Abbreviations

Beg beginning; **cm** centimetre; **cont** continue; **dec** decrease; **foll** follow; **g** gram; **k** knit; **p** purl; **patt** pattern; **pm** place marker; **rem** remaining; **rep** repeat; **RS** right side; **sl1p** slip 1 stitch purlwise; **ssk** slip 2 stitches knit-wise, knit these 2 stitches together through back loops (single left-leaning decrease); **st(s)** stitch(es); **st st** stocking stitch; **tog** together; **tbl** through back loop; **WS** wrong side; **yb** yarn back; **yf** yarn front; * repeat the instructions following the single asterisk as directed; [ ] work instructions within brackets as many times as directed or for a specific size.

Slip stitch pattern

Row 1 (RS): Using B, k3, *sl1p, k3; rep to end.
Row 2 (WS): K3, *yf, sl1p, yb, k3; rep to end.
Row 3: Using A, k1, *sl1p, k3; rep to last 2 sts, sl1p, k1.
Row 4: K1, *yf, sl1p, yb, k3; rep to last 2 sts, yf, sl1p, yb, k1.
These 4 rows **set** the pattern.



Back

Using 4.5mm needles and A, cast on 109(117:131:139:153) sts.
Rib row 1 (RS): K1, *p1, k1; rep from * to end.
Rib row 2 (WS): P1, *k1, p1; rep from * to end.
These 2 rows **set** rib. Cont in rib until work measures 5cm from cast on edge, ending with RS facing for next row.
Dec row (RS): K1(6:5:9:8), k2tog, [k6, k2tog] 13(13:15:15:17) times, k1(5:4:8:7). 95(103:115:123:135) sts.
Next row (WS): Knit.
Change to 5mm needles and work in slip stitch pattern (throughout) until back measures 34cm from cast on edge, ending after a WS row.

Shape armholes

Cast off 4(4:6:6:8) sts at the beg of next 2 rows. 87(95:103:111:119) sts.
Dec row (RS): Ssk, patt to last st, k2tog. 85(93:101:109:117) sts.
Rep last row a further 9(10:11:12:13) times. 67(73:79:85:91) sts.***
Work a further 76(83:90:97:106) rows straight.

Shape shoulders

Cast off 8(9:10:11:12) sts at the beg of next 4 rows. 35(37:39:41:43) sts.
Slip rem sts on to a holder.

Front

Work as for Back to ***.
Work 0(1:0:1:0:0) row(s) straight.
Next row (RS): Patt 33(36:39:42:45), turn and leave the rem 34(37:40:43:46) sts on a holder.
Next row (WS): Patt2tog, patt to end. 32(35:38:41:44) sts.
Work 3 rows straight in patt.
Rep last 4 rows 14(14:13:13:11) times more. 18(21:25:28:33) sts.
Next row (WS): Patt2tog, patt to end. 17(20:24:27:32) sts.
Work 5 rows straight in patt.
Rep last 6 rows 1(2:4:5:8) time(s) more. 16(18:20:22:24) sts.
Work 3 rows straight in patt.
Next row (RS): Cast off 8(9:10:11:12) sts, patt to end. 8(9:10:11:12) sts.
Patt 1 row.
Cast off.

With RS facing, working on rem 34(37:40:43:46) sts, slip centre stitch on to a safety pin, patt to end.
Next row (WS): Patt to last 2 sts, p2tog tbl. 32(35:38:41:44) sts.
Work 3 rows straight in patt.
Rep last 4 rows 14(14:13:13:11) times more. 18(21:25:28:33) sts.
Next row (WS): Patt to last 2 sts, p2tog tbl.
Work 5 rows straight in patt.
Rep last 6 rows 1(2:4:5:8) time(s) more. 16(18:20:22:24) sts
Work 4 rows straight in patt.
Next row (RS): Cast off 8(9:10:11:12) sts, patt to end. 8(9:10:11:12) sts.
Patt 1 row.
Cast off.

Neckband

Join right shoulder seam.
Using 4.5mm needles and A, pick up and knit 41(45:49:51:57) sts evenly down left side of neck, knit across 1 st left on safety pin, pm on this st, pick up and knit 40(44:48:50:56) sts evenly up right side of neck, knit across 35(37:39:41:43) sts left on holder for back neck. 117(127:137:143:157)sts.
Row 1 (WS): P1, *k1, p1; rep from * to end.
Row 2 (RS): [K1, p1] to 2 sts before marked st, ssk, k1, k2tog, [p1, k1] to end.
Row 3 (WS): [P1, k1] to 1 st before marked st, p3, [k1, p1] to end.
Row 4 (RS): [K1, p1] to 2 sts before marked st, ssk, k1, k2tog, [p1, k1] to end.
Rep Rows 1 and 2 once more. 111(121:131:137:151)sts.
Cast off in rib.

Armhole edgings (both alike)

Join left shoulder and neckband seam.
With RS facing, using 4.5mm needles and A, pick up and knit 48(53:57:62:66) sts evenly up to shoulder seam, pick up and knit 47(52:56:61:65) sts evenly down. 95(105:113:123:131) sts.
Cont in 1x1 rib as set on Back, beginning with Row 1, for 6 rows. Cast off in rib.

Making up

Join side and armhole border seams. Weave in ends. Pin your garment out to the size stated in the pattern, cover with a damp cloth and leave to dry.

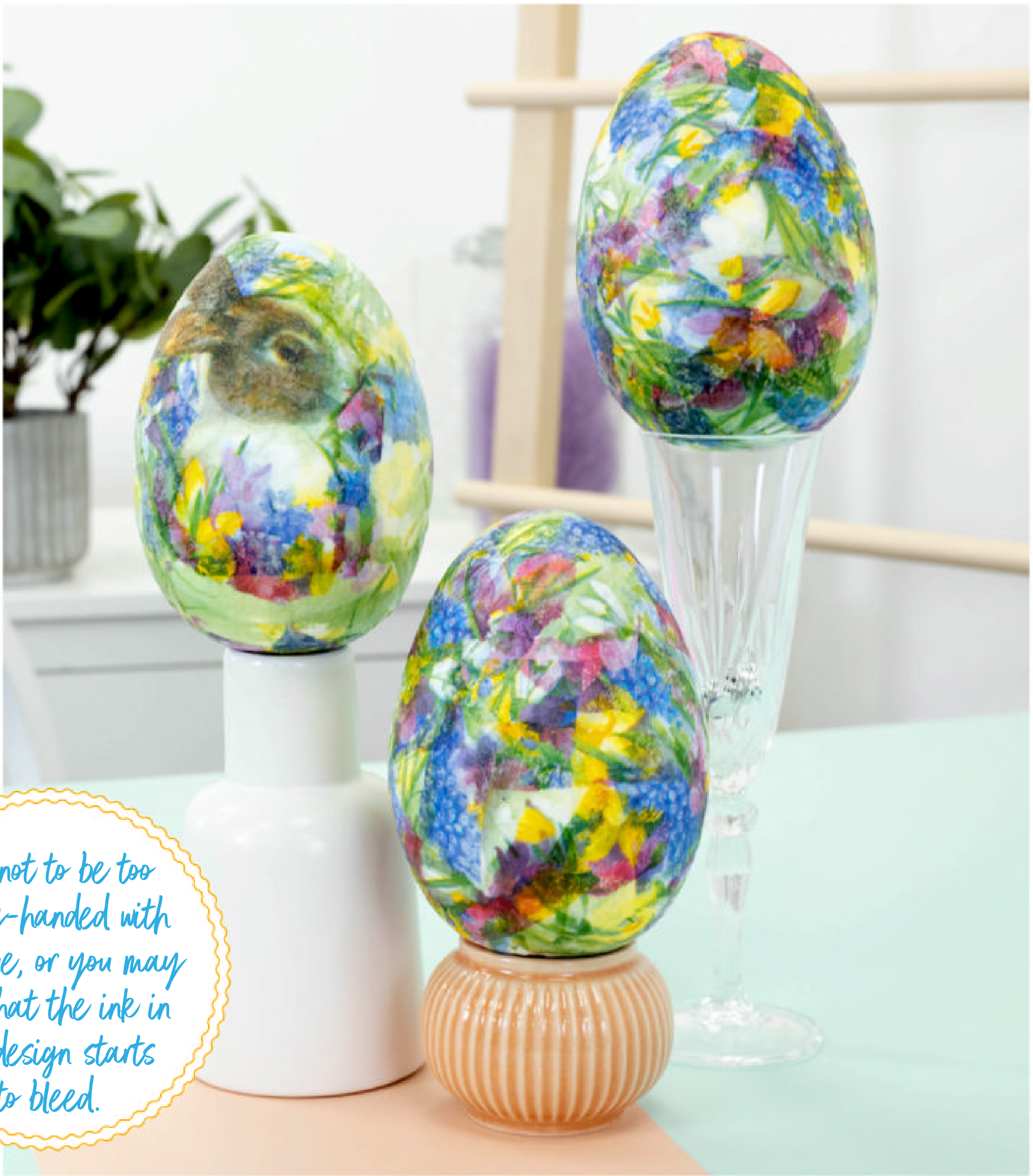
Knits Chloé Elizabeth Birch **Photography** Matt Monfredi **Styling** Helen Johnson **Hair & makeup** Anna Durston

Mindful CRAFTS with Sara Davies

The TV star and top crafter shows you how to make decoupage eggs

Easter decorations have become so much more popular in the last few years and I have loved experimenting with different Easter-themed projects. I've made little treat jars, pompom bunny pots, rabbit-themed wreaths and lots more, but I've seen these decoupage eggs made in a number of ways and knew that I had to give them a go!

love Sara xxx



Try not to be too heavy-handed with the glue, or you may find that the ink in the design starts to bleed.

You will need

✻ Patterned paper napkins (two- or three-ply) ✻ Brush ✻ Mod Podge glue ✻ Foam eggs (I used medium-sized) ✻ Vase, stand or bowl to showcase your finished eggs

To create

① Take the napkin and carefully separate the layers.

② Put the napkin layer with the pattern on to one side.

③ Brush a thin layer of Mod Podge on to the surface of the egg.

④ Tear the patterned napkin layer into pieces and adhere to the egg.

⑤ Once you have added all of the pieces of napkin, brush a light layer of Mod Podge over the entire surface of the egg.

⑥ If there is a larger design on the napkin that you want to feature, carefully cut it out or tear around it to give a softer finish, then glue into position and build up the rest of the design around it until the whole surface of the egg is covered.

⑦ Find your chosen vase or stand and assemble your eggs!

Illustration Getty

For more crafting inspiration, visit crafterscompanion.co.uk

THE *HOUSE BEAUTIFUL* COLLECTION AT **HOMEBASE**

Cutting-edge kitchen designs from the House Beautiful collection at Homebase

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CAMBERWELL
in Cornflower & Nickel

Make a style statement with a contemporary kitchen from the stunning *House Beautiful* range available at Homebase. Choose from the sleek design of the Islington, the clean and contemporary feel of the Camberwell or the classic simplicity of the Bermondsey. Cabinets are supplied preassembled for ease of installation and come with an impressive 20-year guarantee. All *House Beautiful* kitchens are designed and handmade in the UK from FSC-certified sustainably sourced materials. See the full range in store and online, and create a space that's practical and beautiful – and unique to you.

BERMONDSEY in Ash

Visit **homebase.co.uk** to book your virtual or in-store consultation

HOMEBASE

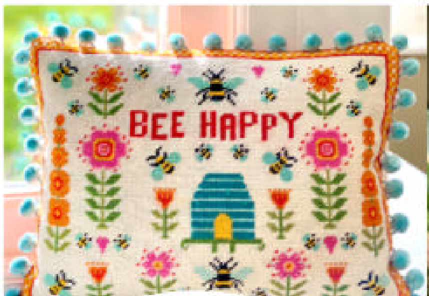
WHAT'S NEW IN THE CRAFT WORLD

Sew it, make it, LOVE IT!

Get inspired with smart ideas from *Prima*'s crafter, Daisy Bendall

Meet the makers

Joanne Stellig and Suzanne Bullman founded the Historical Sampler Company, selling samplers that merge traditional designs with more current motifs.



Friends Suzanne (left) and Joanne share a love of cross stitch

Why did you start your company?
Joanne and I have been friends for a long time. We enjoyed cross stitch but couldn't find designs we liked. We designed our first sampler using charting paper and a pencil, eventually creating five designs. We attended The Knitting & Stitching Show at Olympia, and received such lovely feedback that it spurred us on.

What does a typical day look like?
We manufacture the products ourselves, cutting fabric, printing charts and sorting threads. We also plan future projects, exploring gifting ideas and fabrics for our Stitch-A-Long projects.

You've also launched subscription boxes. How do you manage it all?
Demand has exceeded our wildest estimations. We moved from our cosy home office to a warehouse. Our husbands help out and, at Christmas, our children muck in, too!
•*Visit historicalsamplercompany.co.uk*

SPOTLIGHT ON...

OHH DEER

Find quirky cards designed by artists around the world, plus creative craft supplies.

Artful **Art School In A Box** Screen Printing edition, £49.95

Stamp set, £4.95

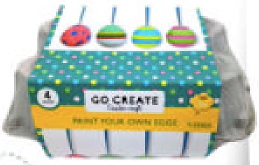
Essdee Individual **Block Printing Ink**, £9.95

Artful **gouache paints**, £5.95 each

Cotton Clara **embroidery hoop**, £19.95

UNDER £10 GET CRAFTY THIS EASTER

Wooden **Embroidery Easter Eggs**, £5.75, Artcuts



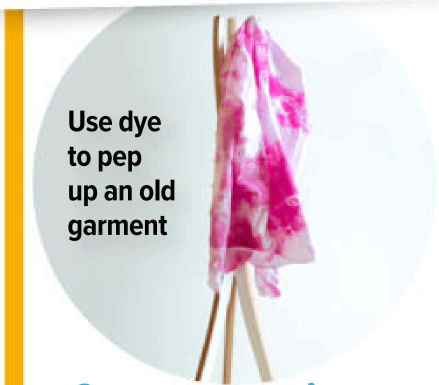
Personalised **Easter Decoration Gift Tin**, £7.95, Cotton Twist

Go Create **Paint Your Own Eggs kit**, £3, Tesco

Paper **Windmill Kit**, £3, Hobbycraft

Make Your Own **Hamper** with bunny ears, £6, Dunelm

Easter Egg Kraft Paper Mache **Fillable Containers**, £5.50 for 2, The Danes



Use dye to pep up an old garment

Genius idea

Give an old shirt a revamp with fabric dye. Either pop it in the washing machine with a dye pod or experiment with different tie-dye effects. Dylon hand wash dye packets cost £3.50, and machine dye pods cost £7.70. Find tips at dylon.co.uk.

3 of the BEST QUILTING KITS

Give your living room some homespun charm.

Log Cabin Star **Wall Quilt Kit**, £27.95, Pelenna Patchworks

Spring Valley **Mini Quilt Kit**, £15, Julia Gahagan at Etsy

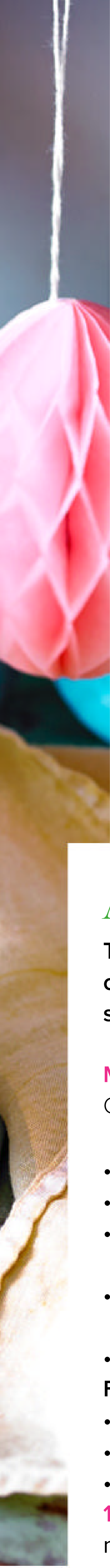
Trip Around The World **Quilt Kit**, £55.95, Alice Caroline

Easter Sunday is 9 April

ASPARAGUS STRAWS WITH CHEAT'S HOLLANDAISE

Easter made easy

We have your showstopping Easter meal covered with this simple but impressive menu full of the flavours of spring



Menu for 8

✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿ ✿

Asparagus straws with cheat's hollandaise

Crab cakes with fennel remoulade

Herb-crumbed leg of lamb

Spring vegetable tart

St Clement's potatoes
Roasted carrots with gremolata
Orange blossom greens

Rhubarb and jelly custard with ginger honeycomb

HERB-CRUMBED LEG OF LAMB

Asparagus straws with cheat's hollandaise

These stylish canapés are super simple and equally delicious served hot or at room temperature. Use regular rather than fine asparagus spears so that they hold their shape while cooking.

MAKES 24 PREP *25min, plus cooling*
COOK *about 20min*

- **6 filo pastry sheets, we used Jus-Rol**
- **50g unsalted butter, melted**
- **24 asparagus spears, at least 16cm long, woody ends trimmed**
- **15g Parmesan or vegetarian Italian-style hard cheese, finely grated**
- **Pinch cayenne pepper, optional**

FOR THE CHEAT'S HOLLANDAISE

- **125g butter, chopped**
- **100g mayonnaise**
- **1tsp lemon juice**

1 Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6. Line 2 baking sheets with baking parchment. Place 1 filo sheet on a board (keep remaining filo covered with a damp tea towel). Brush with a little butter, then top with another filo sheet. Cut into quarters, then slice each rectangle in ½ diagonally to make 8 sloping triangles.

2 Working with 1 triangle at a time, with the longest edge closest to you, place an asparagus spear vertically on the left of the long edge. Roll up tightly in the filo. Repeat rolling with 7 more asparagus spears and filo triangles and arrange on a lined baking sheet, seam-side down.

3 Repeat filo buttering, slicing and rolling to make 24 canapés. Brush with a little more butter and sprinkle the pastry with cheese and a pinch of cayenne, if using.

4 Cook for 15-18min, until the pastry is crisp. Cool for 10min.

5 Meanwhile, make the cheat's hollandaise. Melt butter in a small pan, remove from heat and cool for a few min. In a medium bowl, gradually whisk the melted butter into the mayonnaise. Whisk in the lemon juice, then adjust the seasoning with lemon juice, salt and freshly ground black pepper. Serve with the asparagus straws.

GET AHEAD **Prepare to end of step 3 up to a day ahead. Cover and chill. Make hollandaise up to a day ahead, cover and chill. To serve, complete recipe, gently warming hollandaise in a pan to loosen.**

PER CANAPÉ (WITH HOLLANDAISE):
CALS 110; FAT 10G; SAT FAT 4G; CARBS 4G ➜

SPRING VEGETABLE TART

RHUBARB AND JELLY CUSTARD WITH GINGER HONEYCOMB

Crab cakes with fennel remoulade

You can keep costs down by using a mixture of fresh and tinned crab meat, if you like. Look for tinned lump crab and use larger pieces of fresh crab to prevent the crab cakes from being mushy.

SERVES 8 PREP *45min, plus chilling*
COOK *about 10min*

FOR THE CRAB CAKES

- **2 spring onions, finely chopped**
- **¾tsp English mustard powder**
- **1½tsp lemon juice**
- **3tbsp finely chopped parsley**
- **40g dried breadcrumbs**
- **1 large egg, beaten**
- **450g white crab meat, fresh, tinned, or a mixture**
- **Sunflower oil, to shallow fry**
- **50g plain flour**
- **Pinch cayenne pepper**

FOR THE REMOULADE

- **2 small fennel bulbs**
- **Juice 1 lemon**
- **3tbsp crème fraîche**
- **3tbsp mayonnaise**
- **1-2tsp Dijon mustard, to taste**
- **2tbsp finely chopped parsley, plus extra to garnish**

TO SERVE

- **100g watercress**
- **Extra virgin olive oil, to drizzle**

1 Line a large baking sheet with baking parchment. For the crab cakes, in a medium bowl, mix the spring onions, mustard powder, lemon juice, parsley, breadcrumbs and some seasoning. Mix in the egg, followed by the crab meat; take care not to break it up too much.

2 Shape into 24 small patties and place on the lined sheet. Chill for at least 30min (up to 24hr) to firm up.

3 For the remoulade, halve, core and finely shred the fennel. In a medium bowl, mix fennel and lemon juice. Set aside for 15min. In a small bowl, mix crème fraîche, mayonnaise, mustard, parsley and some seasoning. Stir crème fraîche mixture into the fennel to coat. Cover and chill until ready to serve.

4 Pour oil into a large frying pan so that it is 5mm deep. Heat to 175°C (check using a thermometer). Mix the flour, cayenne pepper and some seasoning in a shallow bowl. Carefully coat the crab cakes in the flour and gently shake off the excess (they will be fragile).

5 Fry in batches for 2-3min per side, until golden. Using a slotted spoon, lift on to kitchen paper to drain, then keep warm. Repeat with remaining crab cakes, monitoring oil temperature as you go.

6 Toss the watercress with a little extra virgin olive oil and divide between 8 plates. Top with crab cakes and serve with the remoulade.

GET AHEAD **Prepare to end of step 3 up to a day ahead. Cover and chill crab cakes. Complete recipe to serve.**

PER SERVING: CALS 195; FAT 12G; SAT FAT 3G; CARBS 7G

Cook's tip

The crab cakes are best eaten freshly fried, but can also be frozen. Defrost in the fridge and reheat in the oven until piping hot.

Herb-crumbed leg of lamb

Elevate your roast lamb with a delicious nutty, herby crust. It looks attractive and the crumb also serves as a stuffing alongside the meat.

SERVES 8 PREP *20min, plus coming to room temperature and resting*
COOK *about 1hr 40min*

- **2kg whole leg of lamb, on the bone**
- **2 onions, each cut into 8 wedges through the root**
- **1tbsp olive oil**

FOR THE CRUMB

- **125g white bread or fresh breadcrumbs**
- **2 garlic cloves, peeled**
- **100g pistachio kernels**
- **25g walnuts**
- **30g bunch flat-leaf parsley**
- **30g bunch mint, leaves picked**
- **Finely grated zest 1 orange**
- **100ml olive oil**
- **2tbsp Dijon mustard**

FOR THE GRAVY

- **3tbsp plain flour**
- **200ml white wine**
- **400ml lamb or chicken stock**

1 Take lamb out of fridge 30min before roasting. Pat dry with kitchen paper.

2 Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6. Put the lamb in a roasting tin just large enough to hold it, then arrange onions around it. Season and drizzle over 1tbsp oil. Roast for 1½hr for pink meat. If your leg of lamb is larger/smaller, calculate the cooking time: allow 18min per 500g, plus 15min for medium-rare or 20-22min per 500g, plus 15min for well done.

3 Meanwhile, make the crumb: whizz the bread(crumbs), garlic and nuts in a food processor to crumbs. Add the parsley (stalks and all), mint leaves and orange zest and whizz again until finely chopped. If you don't have a food processor, finely chop by hand. Scrape the mixture into a bowl and mix in the oil and plenty of seasoning – it should hold together when pressed (you may need more oil if chopped by hand).

4 Remove lamb from the oven 20min before end of cooking time. Brush the mustard over the top and sides and carefully spoon and pat on the crumb (don't worry if some falls into the tin). Return to the oven for remaining cooking time – a meat thermometer pushed into the thickest part of the meat should read about 60°C (for pink meat). Lift lamb on to a board (reserve the tin), cover loosely with foil and leave to rest in a warm place for 30-45min.

5 Meanwhile, make the gravy. Spoon all but 2tbsp of fat out of the roasting tin (leaving onions and any crumb mixture in there). Stir in the flour and cook over medium hob heat for 1min. Gradually stir in the wine and simmer for a few min. Stir in stock and simmer, stirring occasionally, until thickened. Strain and check seasoning. Serve alongside the lamb, reheated if needed.

GET AHEAD **Make herb crumb up to 2hr ahead. Cover and store at room temperature. Complete recipe to serve.**

PER SERVING: CALS 679; FAT 48G; SAT FAT 12G; CARBS 14G

Spring vegetable tart

This zesty centrepiece is quick and easy to prepare. Allow the pastry to soften at room temperature a little before unrolling to stop it cracking.

SERVES 4 AS A MAIN, 6-8 AS A SIDE
PREP *20min, plus chilling and cooling*
COOK *about 40min*

- **320g ready-rolled shortcrust pastry**
- **1 egg, beaten**
- **250g ricotta**
- **Finely grated zest and juice 1 lemon**
- **75g mature Cheddar, finely grated**
- **1tbsp mint leaves, finely chopped, plus extra small leaves to garnish**
- **40g spring greens, finely shredded and with woody core discarded**
- **2tbsp olive oil**
- **4 spring onions**
- **75g radishes, sliced**
- **40g walnuts, roughly chopped**

1 Line a baking sheet with baking parchment. Unroll pastry on to the baking sheet. Fold all the sides in to create 2cm-wide border, then crimp the border with your fingers. Chill for 30min.

2 Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6. Prick pastry inside border well with a fork, then brush all over with beaten egg. Cook for 15-20min, until pastry is golden and sandy to the touch.

3 In a bowl, mix together the ricotta, lemon zest and juice, Cheddar, mint and some seasoning. In a separate bowl, toss the spring greens with 1tbsp olive oil. Trim the spring onions to remove the root and some of the tougher green leaves at the top, then slice lengthways into quarters.

4 Spread the ricotta mixture inside the tart border and scatter over the spring greens. In the empty bowl, toss the spring onions, radishes and remaining oil. Arrange on top of the greens. Return to the oven for 15-18min, until the vegetables are tender.

5 Allow the tart to cool slightly. Scatter over walnuts and mint leaves. Serve warm or at room temperature.

GET AHEAD **Prepare to end of step 2 up to a day ahead. Cool completely and store the pastry in an airtight container at room temperature. Complete recipe to serve.**

PER SERVING (IF SERVING 6): CALS 457; FAT 35G; SAT FAT 13G; CARBS 22G

St Clement's potatoes

Make a change from regular roasties with this sunny potato dish. The initial braising imparts flavour into the potatoes before roasting at the end to crisp them up.

SERVES 8 PREP *15min*
COOK *about 2hr 20min*

- **2kg medium-size floury potatoes, such as Maris Piper**
- **6 garlic cloves, crushed**
- **100ml fresh orange juice**
- **100ml fresh lemon juice**
- **4tbsp Dijon mustard**
- **2tbsp dried oregano**
- **250ml olive oil**
- **1 orange, cut into 8 wedges**
- **1 large lemon, cut into 8 wedges**

1 Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6. Peel and cut potatoes into quarters lengthways (if potatoes are large, you may need to cut them in ½ horizontally also).

2 Put potatoes into a large, deep roasting tin or ovenproof serving dish. In a jug, whisk the garlic, orange and lemon juices, mustard, oregano and olive oil with some seasoning. Pour over the potatoes and stir to coat.

3 Cover tin/dish tightly with foil and cook for 1½hr, stirring halfway through.

4 Remove foil and carefully stir the potatoes to coat them in the dressing, being careful not to break them up. Add the orange and lemon wedges and return to the oven, uncovered, for 40-50min, giving them a shake halfway through to prevent the potatoes from sticking. Check seasoning and serve.

GET AHEAD **Prepare to end of step 2 up to 1hr ahead; cover and keep at room temperature. To serve, stir and complete recipe.**

PER SERVING: CALS 440; FAT 24G; SAT FAT 3G; CARBS 49G

ST CLEMENT'S POTATOES
ORANGE BLOSSOM GREENS
ROASTED CARROTS WITH GREMOLATA

Roasted carrots with gremolata

The classic Italian condiment gremolata adds instant vibrancy to earthy roasted carrots. You can replace the tarragon with extra parsley, if you like. Rainbow carrots (also sold as Heritage) add extra colour to this side, but it would be just as delicious made with only orange ones.

SERVES 8 PREP *15min*
COOK *about 50min*

- **1.2kg carrots**
- **3tbsp olive oil**

FOR THE GREMOLATA

- **15g flat-leaf parsley, leaves picked**
- **15g tarragon, leaves picked**
- **1 garlic clove, crushed**
- **Finely grated zest 2 lemons**
- **1tbsp olive oil**

1 Preheat oven to 200°C (180°C fan) mark 6. Peel and trim the carrots, cutting in half or into quarters lengthways if thick. Toss with oil and seasoning on a baking tray and roast for 45-50min, until tender.

2 Meanwhile, make the gremolata. Finely chop the parsley and tarragon leaves and mix in a small bowl with the garlic, lemon zest, oil and some seasoning.

3 Transfer carrots to a serving dish and mix through the gremolata. Serve.

GET AHEAD **Prepare the carrots, but don't roast them, up to 2hr ahead; set aside at room temperature. Make the gremolata up to a day ahead; chill in an airtight container. To serve, complete recipe, removing gremolata from the fridge to come up to room temperature before mixing through.**

PER SERVING: CALS 115; FAT 6G; SAT FAT 1G; CARBS 11G ➜

Orange blossom greens

The distinctive floral flavour of orange blossom lifts this side dish, but you could use the finely grated zest of 1 orange instead, or swap the runny honey for orange blossom honey.

SERVES 8 PREP *15min*
COOK *about 10min*

- **650g fine green beans, trimmed**
- **300g frozen peas**
- **75g blanched hazelnuts**

FOR THE DRESSING

- **50g butter, see Cook's tip**
- **1tbsp runny honey**
- **2tsp orange blossom water, see intro**
- **2tsp white wine vinegar**
- **1tbsp lemon juice**

1 Cook beans in a large pan of boiling water for 4-5min, until just tender, adding the peas for the final few min. Drain well and set aside.

2 Heat a large frying pan over medium heat and toast the hazelnuts, shaking the pan occasionally, until golden brown. Tip on to a chopping board and, when cool enough to handle, roughly chop.

3 Add dressing ingredients to the frying pan with some seasoning and heat gently to melt the butter, whisking to combine.

4 Add the drained beans and peas to the frying pan, stirring to coat and reheat. Season and stir though most of the hazelnuts. Transfer to a serving dish and scatter over remaining hazelnuts. Serve.

GET AHEAD **Prepare to end of step 2 up to a day ahead. Once drained, cool beans and peas under cold running water. Drain again, pat dry, cover and chill. Store hazelnuts in an airtight container at room temperature. To serve, remove veg from fridge 1hr before completing recipe.**

PER SERVING: CALS 170; FAT 12G; SAT FAT 4G; CARBS 8G

Cook's tip

To make the dressing lighter, you can substitute the butter with 50ml olive oil, if you like.

Rhubarb & jelly custard with ginger honeycomb

Choose the pinkest rhubarb you can find to give the jelly its beautiful colour. If your rhubarb is green, you can mix a little red or pink food colouring into the syrup. If you don't fancy making the honeycomb, some crumbled ginger biscuits would also add lovely crunch.

SERVES 8 PREP *30min, plus cooling and chilling* COOK *about 35min*

FOR THE JELLY

- **1kg forced rhubarb, trimmed**
- **250g caster sugar**
- **8 sheets platinum-grade leaf gelatine, we used Dr. Oetker**

FOR THE CUSTARD

- **1 vanilla pod**
- **200ml whole milk**
- **400ml double cream**
- **6 large egg yolks**
- **75g caster sugar**
- **1tbsp cornflour**

FOR THE HONEYCOMB

- **Oil, to grease**
- **½tsp ground ginger**
- **1tsp bicarbonate of soda**
- **125g caster sugar**
- **3tbsp golden syrup, see Cook's tip**

YOU WILL ALSO NEED

- **A large piece of muslin, available from Ocado, Lakeland or Amazon, or a clean J-Cloth**

1 For the jelly, cut the rhubarb into 2.5cm pieces and put into a medium pan with the sugar and 350ml water. Heat gently, stirring until sugar dissolves, then bring to the boil, cover and simmer for 10min, until rhubarb is tender. Meanwhile, soak the gelatine leaves in cold water for 5min.

2 Line a colander or sieve with a large piece of muslin or clean J-Cloth and set over a large, heatproof jug. Strain in the hot rhubarb mixture, pressing down on the pulp. You should have about 1 litre of syrup (you can save any extra syrup to drizzle over yogurt or use in cocktails). Discard pulp.

3 Lift gelatine out of water, squeeze out excess water, and stir into hot rhubarb syrup to dissolve. Pour into 8 x 200ml serving glasses. Cool completely, then chill for at least 4hr, until set.

4 Meanwhile, make the custard. Halve the vanilla pod lengthways and scrape out the seeds. Add seeds and pod to a medium pan with the milk and double cream and heat over medium heat until just simmering. Remove from heat and leave to infuse for 10min. Discard pod.

5 In a bowl, whisk yolks, sugar and cornflour. Whisk in the warm cream mixture, then return mixture to the pan and cook, whisking until thickened (it needs to just come to the boil, but don't over-boil, otherwise it will scramble). Strain through a sieve into a bowl, lay clingfilm or baking parchment directly on the surface, then cool.

6 Spoon custard over the set jelly and chill for at least 2hr to thicken.

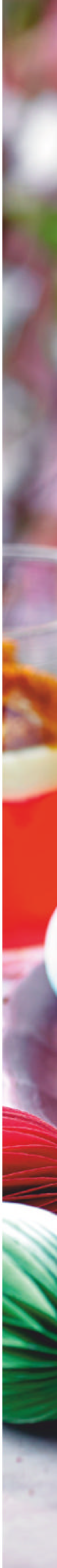
7 To make the honeycomb, grease a small loaf tin or baking tray. Mix ginger and bicarbonate of soda in a small bowl. Heat sugar and golden syrup in a medium pan over low heat, swirling the pan every now and then, until sugar dissolves. Increase heat and bubble until a rich amber colour (or 148°C on a sugar thermometer). Remove from heat and quickly whisk in the ginger mixture to combine – be careful, as it will froth up! Don't over-whisk or the air bubbles will be too small. Pour into/on to the greased tin/tray. Leave to cool and harden.

8 To serve, break the honeycomb into small pieces and sprinkle over the custard. Serve immediately.

GET AHEAD **Make jelly up to 3 days ahead; once set, cover and chill. Add custard up to a day ahead. Make honeycomb up to 3 days ahead; once cool, wrap and store in an airtight container at room temperature. Complete recipe to serve.**

PER SERVING: CALS 581; FAT 32G; SAT FAT 19G; CARBS 65G

Recipes Hearst Food Network **Photography** Alex Luck



Cook's tip

The easiest way to measure golden syrup is to lightly grease the measuring spoon first – the syrup will slide right off!

Love Chocolate!

What's Easter without chocolate? From easy but impressive treats to make with (or for) family to swanky puds, we have the very best recipes

Tahini & white chocolate blondies

The sweetness of the white chocolate balances out the tahini's sesame hit.

MAKES 16 PREP *20min, plus cooling and setting* COOK *about 40min*

- **250g unsalted butter, melted, plus extra to grease**
- **200g light brown soft sugar**
- **100g caster sugar**
- **3 medium eggs, beaten**
- **1tsp vanilla bean paste**
- **175g plain flour**
- **½tsp baking powder**
- **200g white chocolate, roughly chopped**
- **100g tahini**

1 Preheat oven to 180°C (160°C fan) mark 4. Grease and line a 20.5 x 25.5cm deep roasting tin with baking parchment.

2 Beat sugars into melted butter, followed by eggs and vanilla, until combined. Mix through flour and baking powder, followed by 150g chocolate. Scrape into prepared tin and smooth mixture with the back of a spoon so that it fills the tin evenly. Dollop over the tahini and swirl into batter with a skewer.

3 Bake for 30min, until golden and set. Leave to cool completely in the tin.

4 Once cooled, melt the remaining white chocolate in a heatproof bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water. Remove the blondie from the tin and drizzle over the melted white chocolate. Leave to set before slicing and serving.

TO STORE **Keep in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 week.**

PER BLONDIE: CALS 349; FAT 21G; SAT FAT 11G; CARBS 34G

Double-decker rocky road

Kids and adults will love this fun twist on classic rocky road. Swap the mini eggs for any Easter treats you have left over.

SERVES 18 PREP *20min, plus cooling, chilling and setting* COOK *about 10min*

FOR THE BASE
- **75g unsalted butter, chopped**
- **150g marshmallows**
- **100g crisped rice cereal**

FOR THE ROCKY ROAD
- **200g dark chocolate, chopped**
- **100g milk chocolate, chopped**
- **1tbsp golden syrup**
- **100g mini marshmallows**
- **50g milk chocolate digestives, roughly chopped**
- **150g chocolate mini eggs**
- **50g Mini Creme Eggs, halved, optional**
- **50g icing sugar**
- **Yellow food colouring, optional**

1 Line a 20.5cm round tin that's at least 4cm deep with clingfilm.

2 For the base, melt butter in a large pan over medium heat. Add marshmallows; stir until melted and combined. Remove from heat and stir in crisped rice cereal. Press into base of prepared tin; cool.

3 For the rocky road, melt chocolates and syrup in a large heatproof bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water. Leave to cool for 10min. Stir in 75g mini marshmallows, chopped digestives and 100g mini eggs. Scrape on to base and spread to level. Scatter over remaining marshmallows, mini eggs and Mini Creme Egg halves, if using. Chill for 1hr, until set.

4 Mix icing sugar with 1tbsp water and a little food colouring, if using. Transfer rocky road to a cake stand or plate, drizzle or pipe over icing and leave to set. Serve.

GET AHEAD Make up to 1 day ahead and store in an airtight container at cool room temperature. It will keep for a few days more, but base may go a little soft.

PER SERVING (WITH CREME EGGS): CALS 267; FAT 11G; SAT FAT 7G; CARBS 38G →

Cook's tip

Use white chocolate with at least 30% cocoa butter content to stop it drying out in the oven.

Chocolate doughnuts with caramelised white chocolate custard

Rich, delicious and best eaten fresh from the fryer. If you don't have time to make the caramelised chocolate, simply stir through melted and cooled white chocolate instead.

MAKES 8 PREP *1hr, plus cooling and rising* COOK *about 1hr 10min*

FOR THE DOUGHNUTS
- 175ml whole milk
- 25g unsalted butter
- 250g strong white bread flour
- 50g cocoa powder
- 10g fast-action dried yeast
- 150g caster sugar
- 1 medium egg
- Vegetable oil, to grease and deep-fry

FOR THE FILLING
- 300ml whole milk
- 1tsp vanilla bean paste
- 2 medium egg yolks
- 50g caster sugar
- 35g plain flour
- 2tbsp custard powder
- 175g good-quality white chocolate, finely chopped, see Cook's tip

1 For the doughnuts, heat the milk and butter in a small pan over low heat to melt the butter. Cool until just warm.

2 In the bowl of a freestanding mixer fitted with a dough hook, mix flour, cocoa powder, yeast, 50g sugar and ½tsp fine salt to combine. Add the egg and cooled milk mixture. Knead on low-medium speed for 8-10min, until springy (the dough should be slightly sticky). Cover bowl and leave to rise in a warm place for 1hr, until doubled in size.

3 Meanwhile, make the filling. Heat the milk and vanilla in a pan until just steaming. In a bowl, mix the egg yolks, sugar, flour and custard powder to a thick paste. Gradually whisk in the hot milk. Return to the pan and cook, whisking constantly, over medium-high heat until thick. Transfer to a large bowl, lay clingfilm or baking parchment directly on to the surface and leave to cool.

4 Make the caramelised white chocolate. Preheat oven to 140°C (120°C fan) mark 1. Scatter white chocolate on to a small, non-stick baking tray. Bake for 50min, removing from oven every 10min and stirring well (this will stop the chocolate catching), until a deep golden-brown colour. Don't worry if your chocolate goes lumpy, just keep going until smooth and caramelised. Leave to cool for 5min before stirring it into the filling. Re-cover and chill until needed.

5 Once the dough has risen, grease a large baking sheet. Divide dough into 8 equal pieces, roll into balls and space apart on the greased sheet. Loosely cover and leave to rise again for 30min, until puffed.

6 Fill a large, heavy-based, high-sided pan with oil so that it's 5cm deep. Heat oil to 160°C (check using a thermometer). Add 4 doughnuts at a time and cook for 3-4min per side, until puffed. Lift out with a slotted spoon on to kitchen paper, then gently toss in remaining 100g sugar. Cool. Repeat with remaining doughnuts, monitoring oil temperature as you go.

7 Whisk filling to loosen, if needed, then transfer to a piping bag fitted with a 1.5cm nozzle. Using a skewer, poke a hole into the side of each doughnut. Pipe in plenty of filling. Serve.

GET AHEAD **Make filling up to 1 day ahead. Complete recipe to serve.**

PER DOUGHNUT: CALS 493; FAT 21G; SAT FAT 9G; CARBS 63G

Recipes Hearst Food Network **Photography** Alex Luck

Glazed chocolate mousse tart

An unadulterated hit of chocolate. You could serve it topped with berries, if you wish, but we've kept it pure and simple.

SERVES 10 PREP *30min, plus chilling, cooling and setting* COOK *about 35min*

FOR THE PASTRY
- **175g plain flour, plus extra to dust**
- **20g cocoa powder**
- **50g icing sugar**
- **150g unsalted butter, chilled and cubed**
- **1 medium egg**

FOR THE MOUSSE FILLING
- **150g dark chocolate, roughly chopped**
- **150g milk chocolate, roughly chopped**
- **50g unsalted butter, chopped**
- **300ml double cream**
- **25g icing sugar, sifted**

TO GLAZE
- **50ml double cream**
- **50g dark chocolate, finely chopped**
- **½tbsp golden syrup**

1 To make the pastry, pulse the flour, cocoa powder, icing sugar and a pinch of salt in a food processor to combine. Add the butter and pulse until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Alternatively, do this by hand, rubbing the butter into the dry ingredients using your fingertips.

2 Add the egg and pulse/mix with a blunt-ended cutlery knife until the pastry clumps together. Tip on to a work surface and bring together into a disc, wrap and chill for 30min.

3 Lightly flour a work surface and roll out the pastry to 3mm thick; use to line a 23cm round, deeply fluted tart tin (3.5cm deep). Trim the edges to neaten and prick the base all over with a fork. Chill for 20min.

4 Preheat oven to 190°C (170°C fan) mark 5. Line the pastry case with a large sheet of baking parchment and fill with baking beans. Blind bake for 15-18min, until pastry sides are set. Carefully remove the parchment and beans. Return the pastry case (in tin) to the oven for 5-8min, until base is cooked through and feels sandy to the touch. Cool in tin.

5 For the mousse filling, melt the chocolates and butter in a heatproof bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water (try to stir the mixture as little as possible). Once melted, set aside to cool (see Cook's Tip).

6 In a separate bowl, whip the cream and icing sugar until the mixture just holds its shape. Fold into the cooled chocolate mixture, keeping in as much air as you can. Scrape into the pastry case (in tin) and smooth to level (making sure you get mixture into the pastry flutes). Chill until set, about 3hr.

7 To make the glaze, heat the cream in a small pan until hot. Remove from heat and stir in the chocolate to melt, followed by the golden syrup and 1tbsp warm water. Scrape on to the tart and tilt the tart to cover (don't spread the glaze or you'll ruin the shine). Leave to set for 30min, before transferring to a cake stand or plate and serving.

GET AHEAD **Prepare to end of step 6 up to 1 day ahead. To serve, complete step 7 up to 2hr ahead. Keep at room temperature. Chill any leftovers for up to 3 days; the glaze will crack, but it will still taste wonderful.**

PER SERVING: CALS 542; FAT 38G; SAT FAT 24G; CARBS 43G

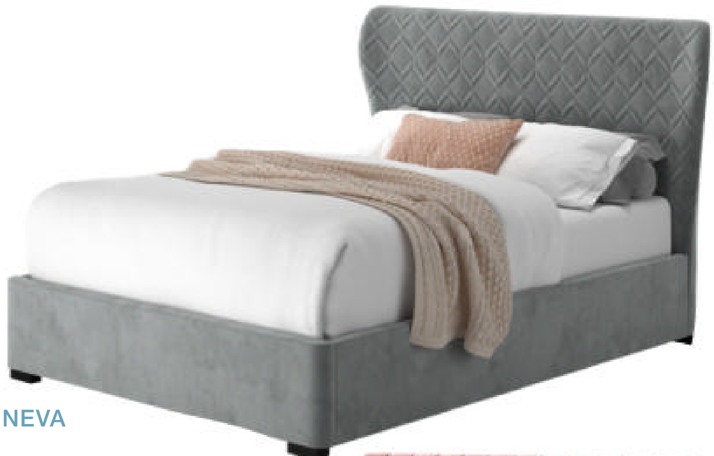
Cook's tip

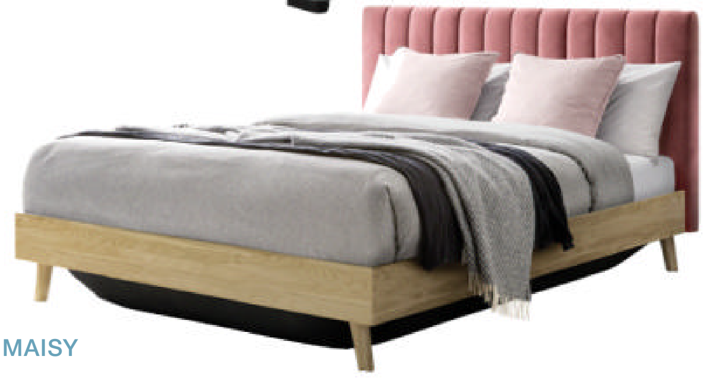
You could add a little amaretto or brandy to the mousse mixture at step 5, if you like.

THE *HOUSE BEAUTIFUL* COLLECTION AT **DREAMS**

For the perfect combination of style and comfort, look no further than the *House Beautiful* **Collection** of bed frames at **Dreams**

NEVA


NEVA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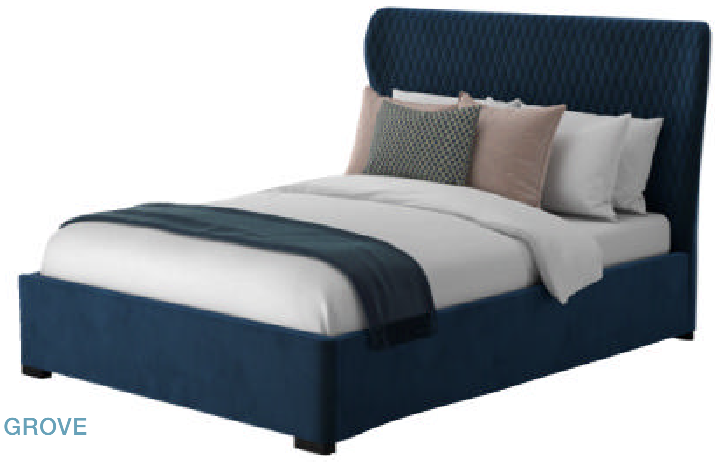
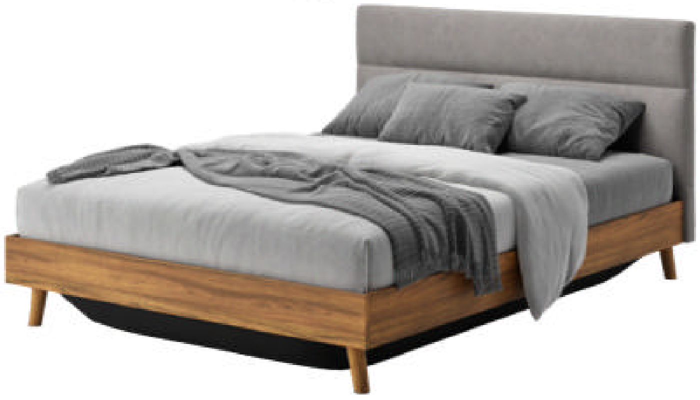

GROVE


FLORENCE

The perfect night's sleep can be more than just a fairy tale, thanks to the *House Beautiful* Collection of sumptuous bed frames at Dreams.

Each of these stunning bed frames, opulently upholstered in super-soft, plush fabric with a luxurious, velvety feel, offers key design and comfort elements, such as deeply padded headboards, sprung slats, detail stitching and natural-effect legs.

As well as looking and feeling gorgeous, the bed frames have masses of hidden storage. Neva and Grove feature capacious end-opening ottomans, big enough to hold spare bedding, duvets, pillows and more, while Maisy and Florence have an ingenious 'shadow' ottoman, a black fabric pouch that blends in seamlessly once the bed is closed, giving the impression that the under-bed is clear. How clever is that?

See more in-store and online at **dreams.co.uk/house-beautiful**

Dreams

Lindt LINDOR Milk Chocolate Egg with Blood Orange Truffles, £11 for 260g, widely available

Hot Cross Bun Wreath Baking Kit, £18 for 550g, Honeywell Bakes

Monty Bojangles Choccy Scoffy World Of Wonder Easter Egg & Truffles, £7 for 175g, Waitrose & Partners and Amazon

Cadbury Creme Egg White (40g), 72p each, widely available

THE LATEST FOODIE DELIGHTS THIS MONTH

FOR EASTER!

Cookery editor Emma Franklin's pick of the top treats

Niederegger Nostalgia Egg, £6.99 for 100g, Lakeland

Toblerone Edgy Egg, £12 for 298g, Tesco

Jar Of Bunnies & Carrots Artisan Biscuits, £28 for 700g, Honeywell Bakes

Martin's Chocolatier The Rabbit & The Duck Choccy Chums collection, £17 for 210g, Amazon

Irresistible Hot Cross Bun Flavour Fudge, £2 for 120g, Co-op

Butlers Farmhouse Cheeses Cheddar Easter Egg, £6 for 120g, Ocado

White Egg, £11 for 150g, Hotel Chocolat

HAPPi Oat M!lk Chocolate Egg Bar, £6.49 for 140g, Waitrose & Partners

Jelly Fried Eggs Gift Box, £9 for 166g, farhi.co.uk

Photography Megan Taylor

Bursting with COLOUR

Say hello to spring with these stylish ways to decorate your home

FLORAL DISPLAYS

Florals for spring aren't groundbreaking but there's a reason why they circle back round year after year: there's nothing quite like a house filled with fresh flowers to make a space feel vibrant. Rather than buying a bouquet of flowers and putting them in a vase without any further thought, consider displaying them in fun and different ways. A bouquet can be split to make the most out of it and to fill different areas of a space. Pop individual stems in bud vases for a pretty and delicate effect. Or, gather foliage to display on a mantelpiece or sideboard to bring the outdoors in. If you're feeling creative, you can always make your own spring wreath to hang on your front door. →

Artificial **wreath**, £12, B&M

Bud **vases**, from £5.99 each, Gisela Graham

Bud **vase**, £6, Dunelm

Hydrangea faux **flower stem**, £7, Rose & Grey

Helmsley foliage **centrepiece**, £55, Sophie Allport

Origins of Impressionism
IMPRESSIONISM

Top tip

Double-dose on florals by using a patterned wallpaper as a spring-inspired backdrop to a vase of flowers.

Sideboard, £1,400, Ercol at Furniture Village. For similar vases, try John Lewis & Partners

WELCOME TO YOUR HOME

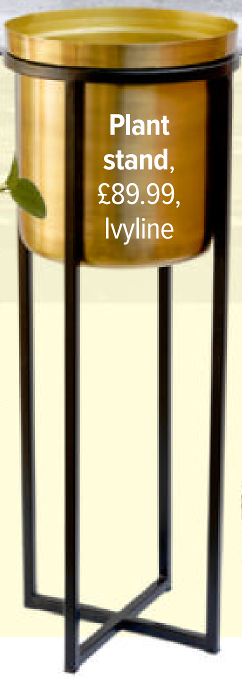
Create a gorgeous entrance to your home. Why not dress up your door and repaint it in a bold and bright colour, such as sunny yellow or magenta? And remember: wreaths aren't just for Christmas! Springtime wreaths add wow factor to the front of your house and allow you to express your individual personality. And consider outdoor lighting – fairy lights are always a failsafe option, while colourful lanterns are a style winner. Invest in a new doormat that has a joyful slogan and colourful details to give a warm welcome to your guests.

Door and frame painted in Tilton **chalk paint**, £23.95 for 1L, Annie Sloan

Top tip

Fresh florals aren't just for inside. Decorate your front door or porch with a bunch of beautiful blooms.

Wreath, £32, Home Luxe Co



Plant stand, £89.99, Ivyline

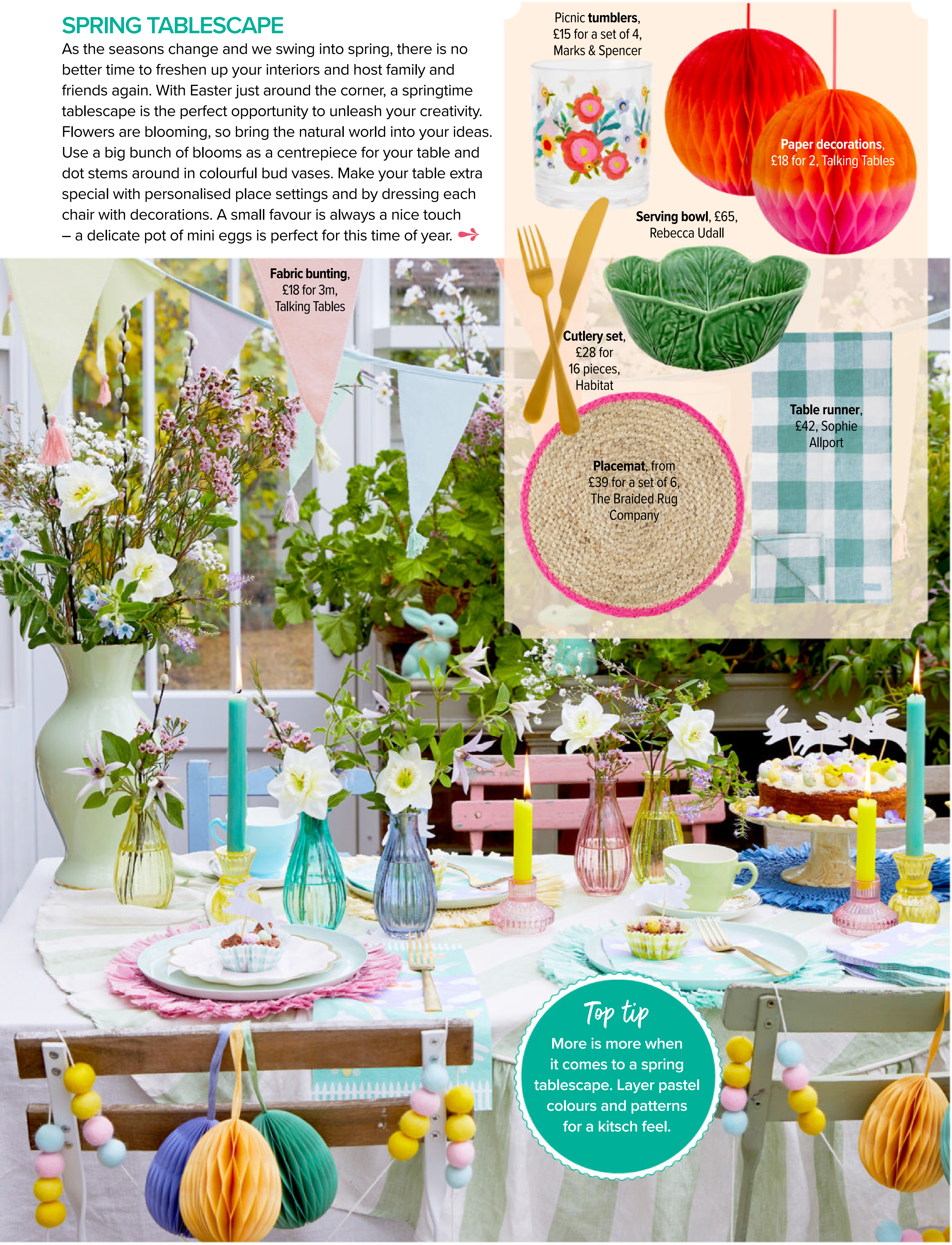
Doormat, £19.50, Oliver Bonas

Fairy lights, £19.99, Homesense

Lantern, £29.99, Dobbies

SPRING TABLESCAPE

As the seasons change and we swing into spring, there is no better time to freshen up your interiors and host family and friends again. With Easter just around the corner, a springtime tablescape is the perfect opportunity to unleash your creativity. Flowers are blooming, so bring the natural world into your ideas. Use a big bunch of blooms as a centrepiece for your table and dot stems around in colourful bud vases. Make your table extra special with personalised place settings and by dressing each chair with decorations. A small favour is always a nice touch – a delicate pot of mini eggs is perfect for this time of year.



Picnic **tumblers**, £15 for a set of 4, Marks & Spencer

Paper decorations, £18 for 2, Talking Tables

Serving bowl, £65, Rebecca Udall

Fabric bunting, £18 for 3m, Talking Tables

Cutlery set, £28 for 16 pieces, Habitat

Table runner, £42, Sophie Allport

Placemat, from £39 for a set of 6, The Braided Rug Company

Top tip

More is more when it comes to a spring tablescape. Layer pastel colours and patterns for a kitsch feel.

EASTER-INSPIRED ACCESSORIES

Be subtle with your choice of accessories – it can be easy to go overboard, but to keep your interiors looking smart and sophisticated, pay homage to Easter with small additions. Hanging decorations are lovely, whether it's an Easter-themed bauble or a springtime wreath; either can be hung anywhere in the home. A useful tip is to keep your Easter accessories to one specific area. Style up a corner of a room with a cushion and a bunch of foraged twigs adorned with hanging decs.

Top tip

Emma Bridgewater's brand new Easter collection is full of fun ceramics and accessories.

Hare **decorations**, £2.50 for a set of 2, Daisy Park

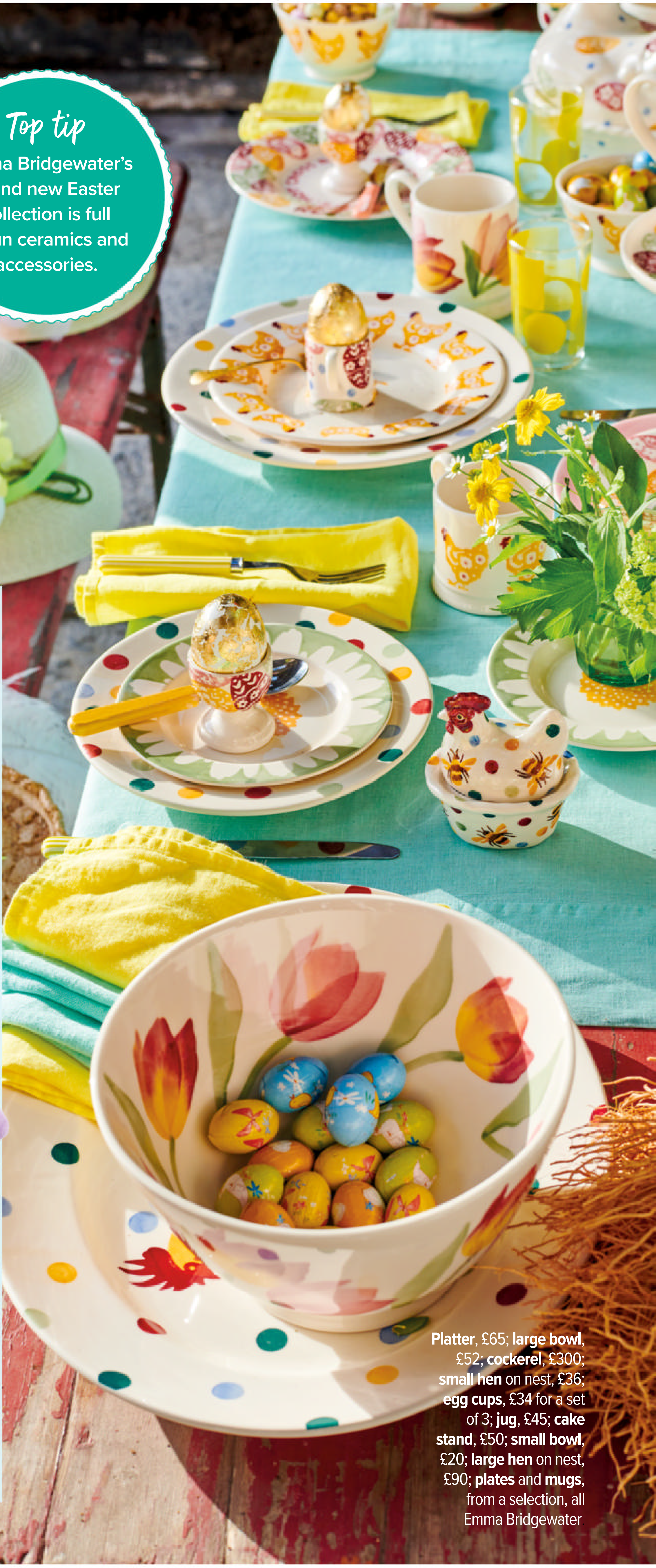
Cushion, £10, George Home

Hanging **eggs**, £14.99, Sophie Allport

Hanging **wreath**, £3.99, Dobbies

Bunny **decoration**, £13.50, Talking Tables

Bunting, £3.50, B&M



Platter, £65; **large bowl**, £52; **cockerel**, £300; **small hen** on nest, £36; **egg cups**, £34 for a set of 3; **jug**, £45; **cake stand**, £50; **small bowl**, £20; **large hen** on nest, £90; **plates** and **mugs**, from a selection, all Emma Bridgewater

Accent chair, £449, Cult Furniture

Art print, £53, Abstract House

Mirror, £145, Oliver Bonas

Cushion, £11, George Home

Rug, £45, George Home

Vase, £24, Next

REFRESH A CORNER

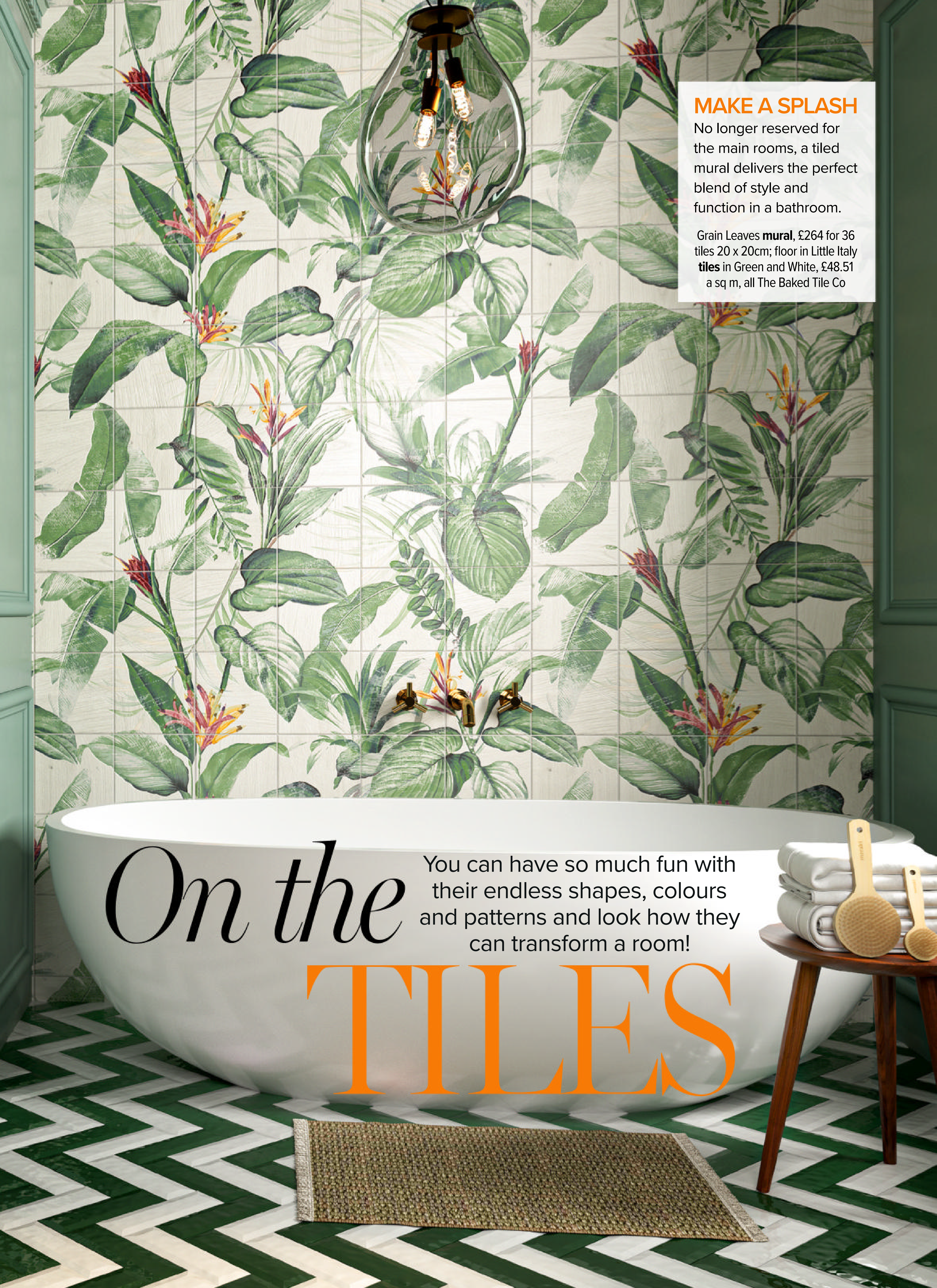
Be playful with your home and restyle areas that might need a freshen-up. You don't have to break the bank to give a corner of your living space a new lease of life – use an accent chair as a focal point and switch up the cushion to nod to a new colour scheme or palette. We are loving the contrast of pink and blue this spring! Frame the wall behind with an art print or a mirror to add extra interest.

Accent chair, £579, Cath Kidston at DFS

Top tip

Display some of your favourite springtime finds on top of a chest of drawers.

Words Becca Cullum-Green



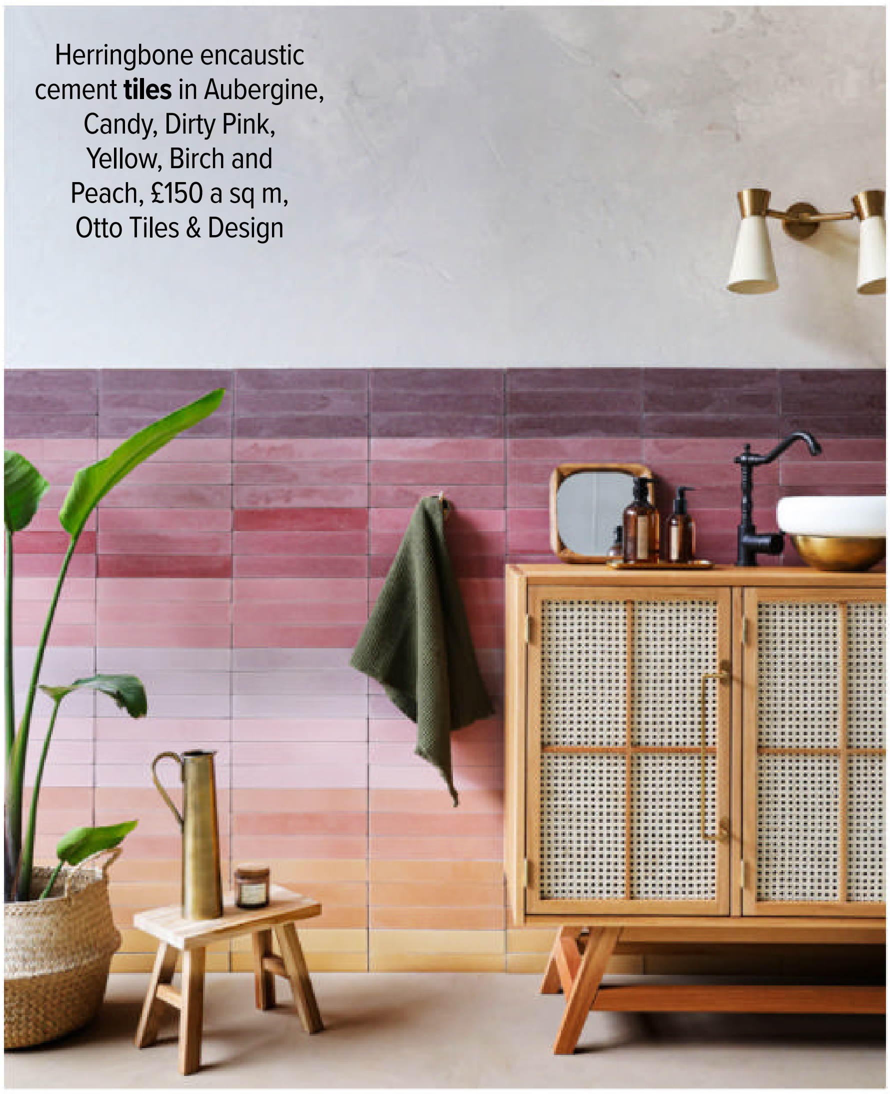
On the TILES

You can have so much fun with their endless shapes, colours and patterns and look how they can transform a room!

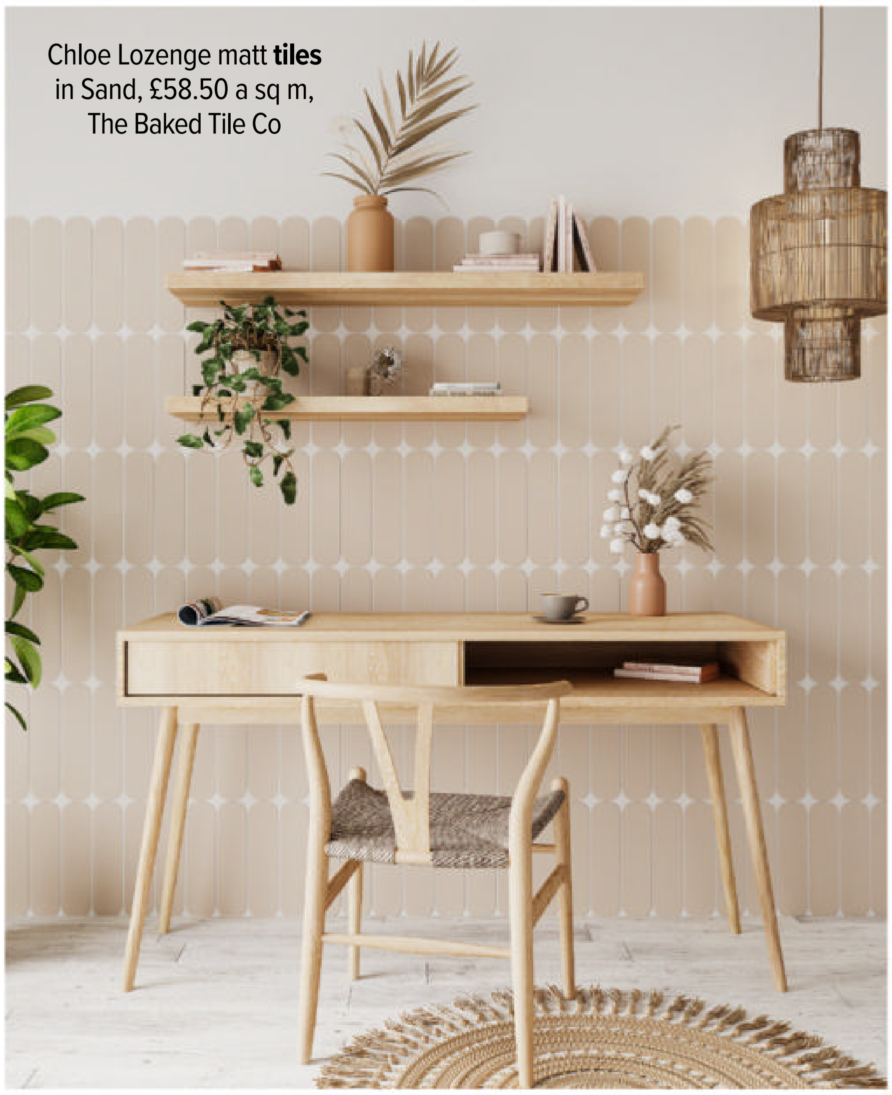
MAKE A SPLASH

No longer reserved for the main rooms, a tiled mural delivers the perfect blend of style and function in a bathroom.

Grain Leaves **mural**, £264 for 36 tiles 20 x 20cm; floor in Little Italy **tiles** in Green and White, £48.51 a sq m, all The Baked Tile Co



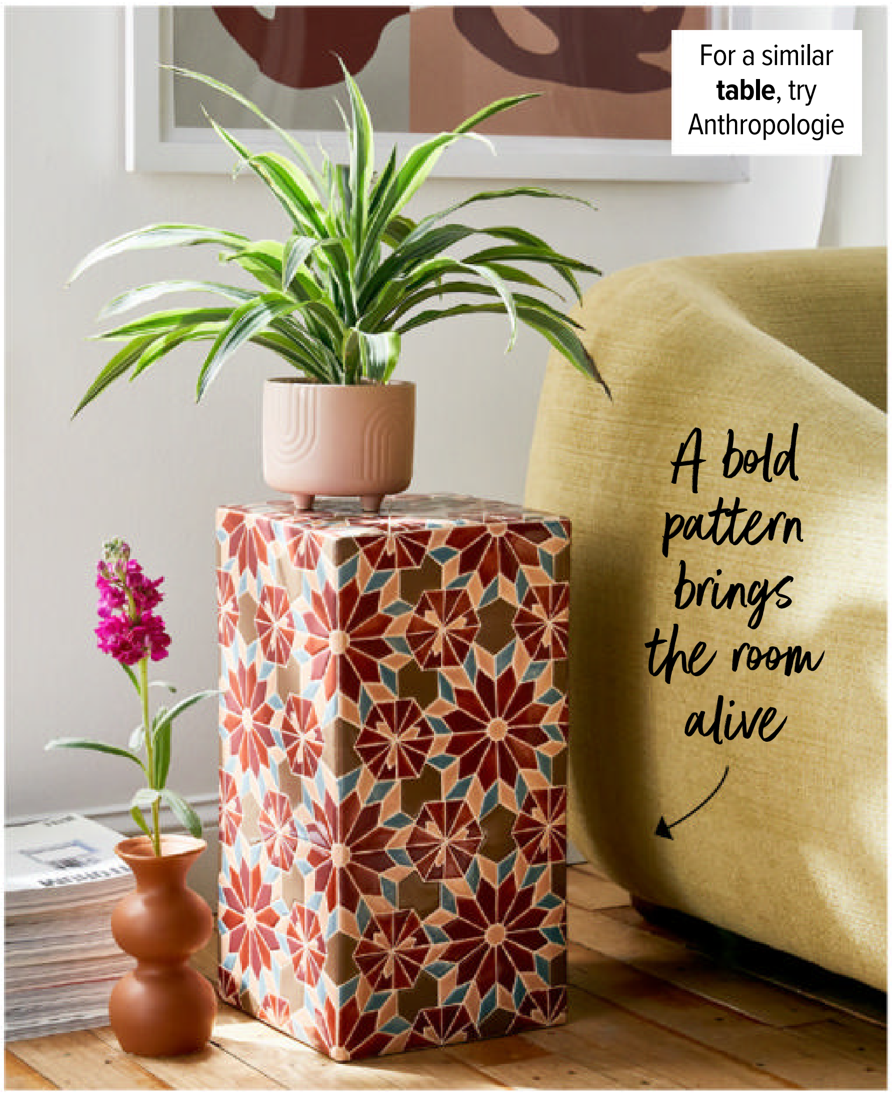
Herringbone encaustic cement **tiles** in Aubergine, Candy, Dirty Pink, Yellow, Birch and Peach, £150 a sq m, Otto Tiles & Design



Chloe Lozenge matt **tiles** in Sand, £58.50 a sq m, The Baked Tile Co

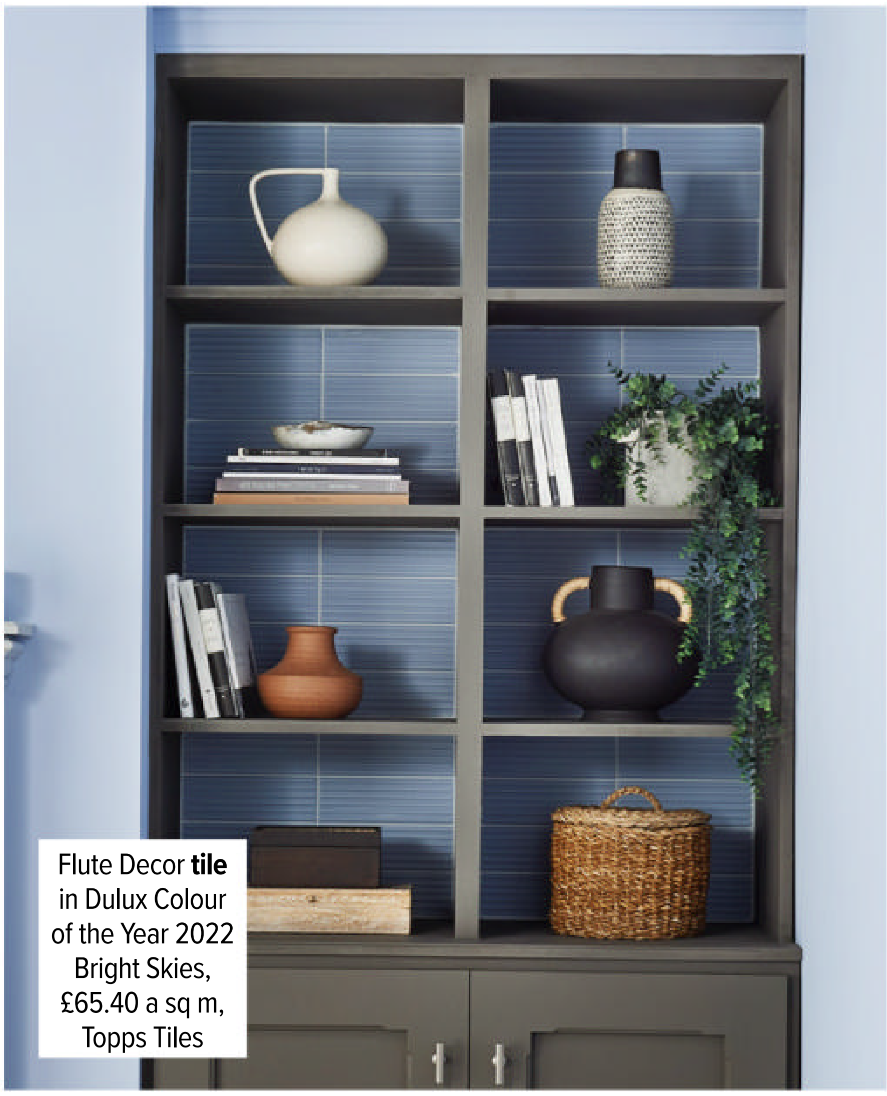
PLAY WITH COLOUR Go half-height with tiles to protect the lower wall from splashes. A clever ombre effect works best as you can vary the tonal colour easily.

UNEXPECTED DESIGN For a feature wall that doesn't overpower, choose neutral tiles that echo the earthy tones of Scandi-style furniture and accessories.



For a similar **table**, try Anthropologie

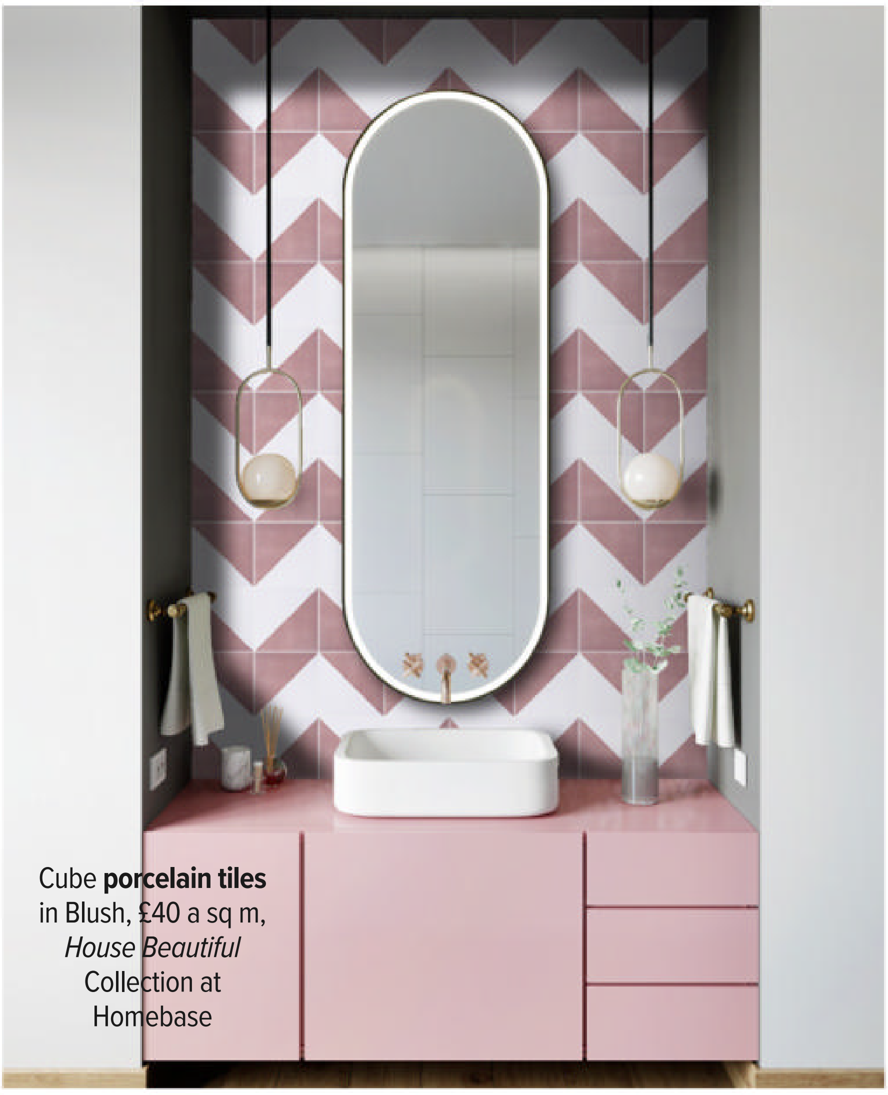
A bold pattern brings the room alive



Flute Decor **tile** in Dulux Colour of the Year 2022 Bright Skies, £65.40 a sq m, Topps Tiles

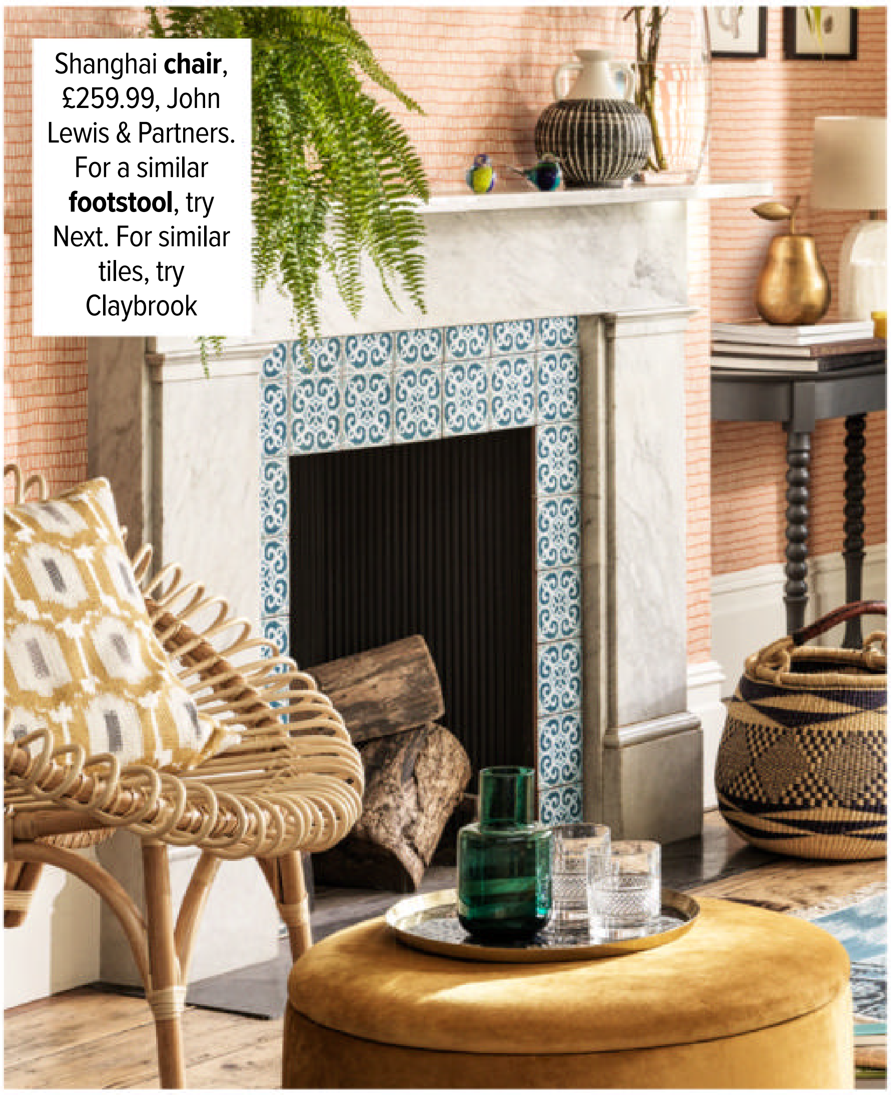
NOD TO THE LOOK A tiled plinth serves as a stylish side table and is perfect for displaying a lamp, house plant or books. Or why not try your hand at tiling for a bespoke piece?

MODERN EDGE With a growing interior trend for fluted glass and reeded wood, you can now get 3D-structured tiles, too. Apply behind open shelving to add tactility. ➔



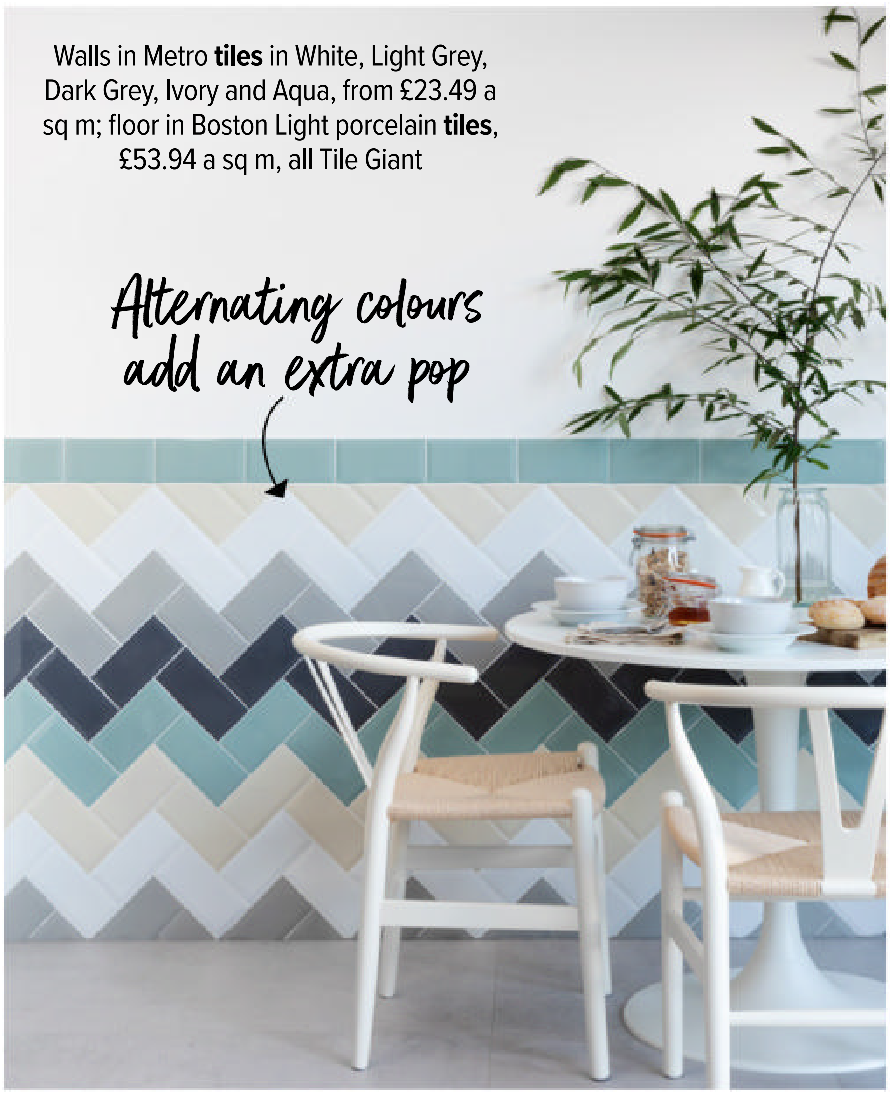
Cube **porcelain tiles** in Blush, £40 a sq m, *House Beautiful* Collection at Homebase

MAKE ROOM A set of tiles with a striking chevron pattern and a pop of colour fits neatly inside an alcove and creates character in a confined space.



Shanghai **chair**, £259.99, John Lewis & Partners. For a similar **footstool**, try Next. For similar tiles, try Claybrook

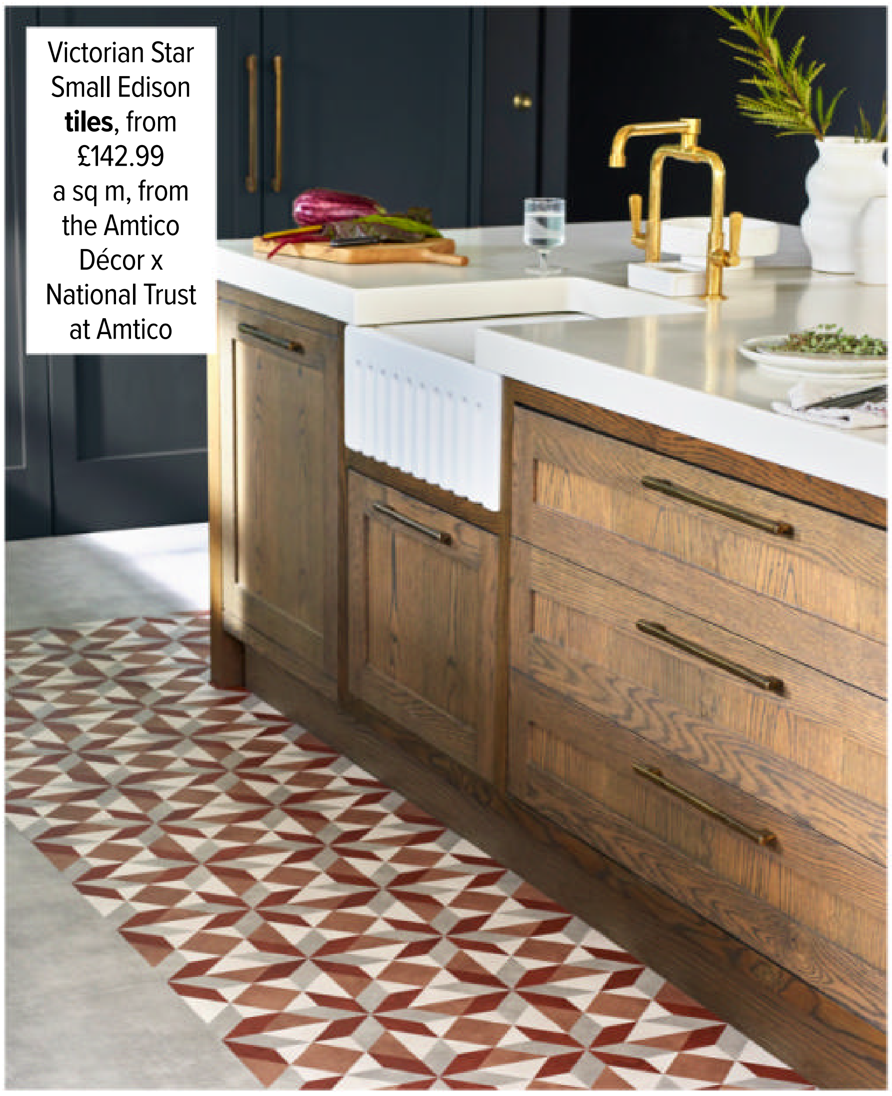
EYE-CATCHING STYLE Acting as an attractive focal point, a fireplace is an ideal feature to make a statement and adding tiles is an opportunity to inject pattern.



Walls in Metro **tiles** in White, Light Grey, Dark Grey, Ivory and Aqua, from £23.49 a sq m; floor in Boston Light porcelain **tiles**, £53.94 a sq m, all Tile Giant

Alternating colours add an extra pop

BISTRO VIBE For a design statement, go for herringbone, combinations of colour or a half wall feature. The secret to success here is the clever mix of all three.



Victorian Star Small Edison **tiles**, from £142.99 a sq m, from the Amtico Décor x National Trust at Amtico

CLEVER POSITIONING Create a visual frame around a prep area by making a rug effect with decorative tiles underneath furniture – keep the rest of the flooring plain.

Compiled by Jessica Taverner

Snuggle up

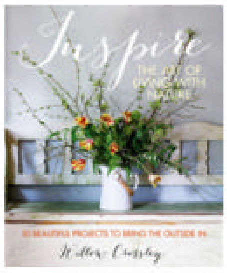
Great for small spaces, the Ashton is the latest addition to the M&S loveseat range.

Loveseat, from £799; **sideboard**, £499; **cushion**, £15; **bolster cushion**, £12.50; **wall mirror** £129, all Marks & Spencer

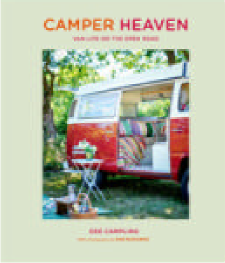
3 of the BEST INTERIORS BOOKS

Get stuck into these new-season releases

Creative Family Home (Ryland, Peters & Small) by Ashlyn Gibson is out 14 March



Inspire: The Art Of Living With Nature (CICO Books) by Willow Crossley is out 10 April



Camper Heaven (CICO Books) by Dee Campling is out 14 March

Genius idea

Where space is tight, foldaway furniture is super useful.

Drop-down **desk**, from a selection, Wayfair

WHAT'S HOT IN INTERIORS THIS MONTH

Style it, do it, LOVE IT!

Great buys from our homes expert Carolyn Bailey

Spotlight on... La Redoute

For home decor with French flair

Faux Olive Tree, £32

BECAUSE YOU'RE
Gorgeous
I'd do anything for you!

Poster, £45

Chest of drawers, £525

Mirror, £80

Vase, £39

Armoire, £79

Clock, £215

PERFECT FOR COCKTAIL HOUR

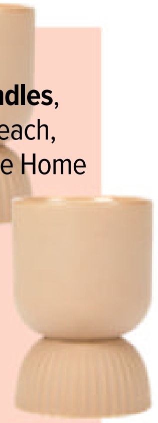
A compact corner is the ideal place for a smart bar table and stools.

Table, 2 **bar stools**, £649 for the set; **footstool**, £429, all Furniture Village

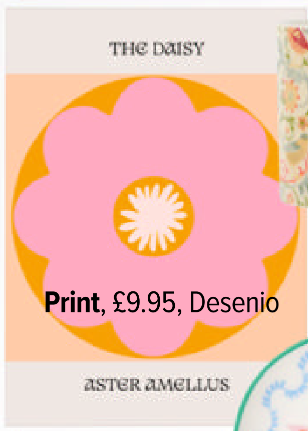
STYLE IT FOR £10 & UNDER

Bring a breath of fresh air into your home

Felt egg **decorations**, £10 for a set of 3, Talking Tables



Candles, £6 each, George Home



Print, £9.95, Desenio

Mug, £5, ProCook

Trinket dish, £7.50, Oliver Bonas

LOVE HEART
LUXURY MATCHES

Matches, £8.95, Trouva

Cushion, £10, Primark

HouseBeautiful
MARKETPLACE

Murphy oak dining table, Murphy dining chairs, Murphy dining bench

READER OFFER
Use the code PRMAG10 for 10% off*

Aries mango wood oval console table

Artificial olive tree

Milah set of 4 cotton stripe placemats

NEW LOOKS FOR THE NEW SEASON

Spring is all about new beginnings, so now's the perfect time to give your home an update, whether that's choosing a new dining set – the Murphy extendable oak table, chairs and bench (top) – bringing the outdoors in with an artificial olive tree (above, centre), or wowing with the Aries console table (above, left). And remember – you get free shipping on orders over £30!

Create your dream space at
housebeautiful.co.uk

SCAN HERE
to shop these
products and more

PHOTOGRAPHY RACHEL WHITING

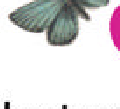
*Offer valid on full-priced items only

STEP INTO SPRING!

With lighter days and the weather warming up (slightly!), it's time to tug on those boots and head outside. Our nine-page garden special has top tips on what to do in your garden through the coming months, plus some beautiful gardens to visit and get inspired by on a spring break. Enjoy!

Photography Getty

Get your GARDEN looking gorgeous



Our useful spring planner will show you what you should be doing over the coming weeks and months to achieve dream results

NOW IS THE TIME TO...

- Make sure your secateurs and loppers are properly sharp, then reduce summer-flowering shrubs like buddleias and lavateras to within 30cm of the ground to contain their size and promote more flowers. Russian sage (Perovskia) and hardy fuchsias should also be pruned, along with colourful winter stems, such as dogwoods (Cornus) and willows. Now's also the time to reduce smoke bush (Cotinus), Paulownia and Catalpa so they produce showy big leaves later in the summer – a really easy way to add an exotic note to the garden.
- If your garden is chilly or your soil heavy, plant roses now. Avoid planting where a rose was growing before, so there's no risk of replant disease. If you haven't yet pruned your existing roses, do it now. Cut out any spindly or crossing stems, along with anything dead, damaged or diseased, aiming to create a balanced, open shape.
- Check variegated evergreens for any all-green shoots and snip them out.
- Spread a good, thick coat of mulch (at least 5cm) on to your borders. Composted bark gives a neat surface; stable manure adds welcome welly to the soil; while mushroom compost will make everything grow like gangbusters – but it's limy, so don't use it around acid-loving plants such as rhododendrons.
- Staking is one of those 'stitch in time' jobs. Do it now while plants are tiny; leave it too late, and it will be a fiddle and the plants never look quite right.
- Honeysuckle soon becomes a horrible tangle if left unpruned so, as the stems come into bud, check to see which ones are alive and cut out the ugly dead wood.

Hellebores are happy in shade and bloom from January into spring

Try this

Brighten a shady spot with an elegant hellebore. It's best to look at them in real life before buying, as every one is subtly different.

TIME-SAVING CHEAT

Buy window boxes with built-in reservoirs: ideal for spots that are a chore to reach, or for growing crops that are prone to bolting, such as rocket and coriander. →

There's still time to prune roses for a fabulous display

Cut out the dead wood from your honeysuckle to encourage blooms

APRIL TO DO

- Apply a combined lawn treatment to fertilise the grass and kill moss and weeds. For best results, rake out all the thatch, dead weeds and blackened moss, and oversow bald patches. Pin horticultural fleece down with tent pegs over the seeded areas to stop birds making away with the lot. Once the grass is growing, get mowing – not too short to start with.
- Find room to plant a few asparagus crowns in a sunny, well-drained bed. It will take two to three years before you can harvest the spears, but once you taste them, you'll wish you'd planted them sooner!
- Once you're sure the soil is neither frozen nor waterlogged, plant or move evergreen trees and shrubs. Before planting, submerge the roots in water until all the air bubbles are released. Then plant (consider sinking a pipe into the hole, to bring water deeper to the roots) and mulch well.
- Feed hungry roses, shrubs and hedges with granular rose feed or a fish, blood and bone mix, sprinkling it over the root area before hoeing lightly into the soil.
- Silver-leaved plants, such as curry plant (Helichrysum), need spring pruning to stop them becoming leggy (the exception is Convolvulus cneorum, pruned in late summer). As long as you can see new growth at the base, cut them back to within 5-10cm (2-4in) of the ground. Then sprinkle grit around the base of the plants to stop them rotting.

Try this

Create a tower of strawberries in a vertical planter – the fruit will be handy to harvest and protected from pests. Run a tube down the centre to make it easy to water.

Cut back Aubretia and Alyssum after flowering

MAY TO DO

- Prune spring-flowering shrubs, such as Japanese quince (Chaenomeles), Forsythia, Choisya and flowering currant (Ribes sanguineum), after flowering. Remove one stem in three from Kerria and Spiraea. If your Clematis montana has got out of hand, now's the time to tackle it. Don't worry if you break a few stems: this plant is very hard to kill.
- Scoop out pond algae and blanket weed before it increases. Leave blanket weed on the side overnight so any pond creatures that are hiding in it can crawl back in. If you are growing your marginal plants in baskets, lift them out and divide any that are overcrowded. Top the baskets with large gravel to keep the fish off before returning them to the pond.
- Give Alyssum, Aubretia and Violas a short back and sides to stop them getting straggly. You can also reduce late-flowering perennials such as Echinacea, Sedum and Phlox by a third (known as the 'Chelsea chop', as it's timed to coincide with the flower show). This will promote more flowers on shorter plants, less in need of staking.
- Tie in new growth on climbing roses while it is still easy to handle.
- Harden off bedding plants ready to plant them out as soon as all frosts have passed. Get a head-start by planting up your baskets and hanging them up in the greenhouse until they're ready to go out.

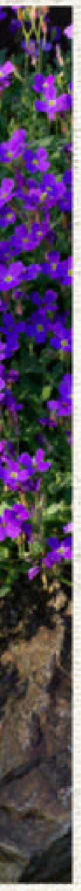
- Plan ahead, planting out a selection of night-scented stocks, chocolate cosmos and fragrant tobacco plants now.

Try this

For masses of lacy white flowers in May, followed by glossy berries and brilliant autumn foliage, plant compact Viburnum plicatum f. tomentosum 'Kilimanjaro Sunrise'.

Above **Tender pelargoniums can go outdoors now**
Left **Viburnums look stunning in late spring**

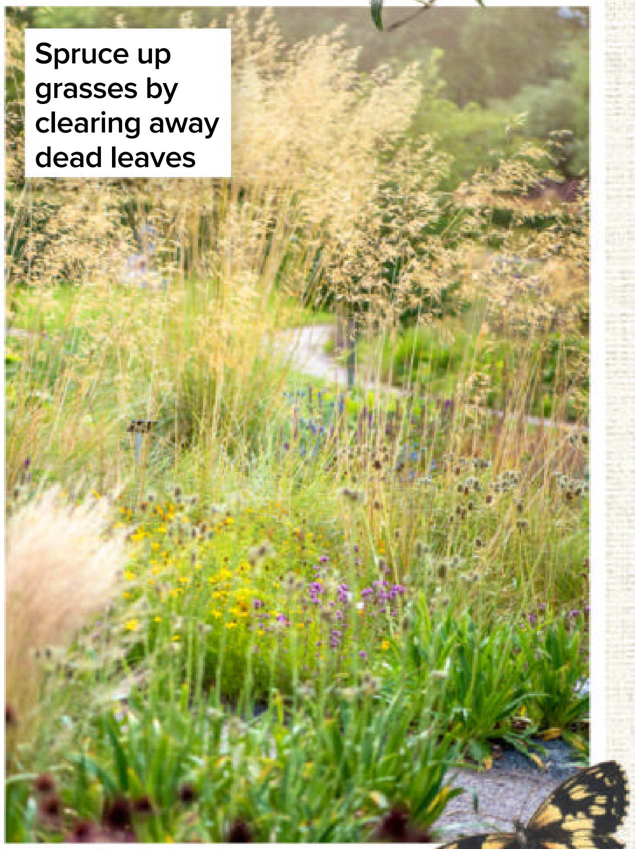
Words Ambra Edwards **Photography** GAP Photos/Elke Borkowski, Getty, Alamy, Enya Todd



Keep tying in sweet peas as they grow

Try this

Standards take years to grow, but you can cheat by fixing a rustic post into the ground and attaching a hanging basket or pot of fuchsias, Bidens or trailing geraniums.

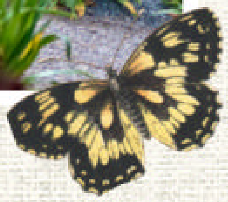


Spruce up grasses by clearing away dead leaves

Feed your lawn regularly or use a mulching mower

TIME-SAVING CHEAT

For lush, green grass without feeding, invest in a mulching lawn mower. It chops up grass cuttings and returns them as a high-nitrogen green mulch.



JUNE TO DO

- Line terracotta pots and hanging baskets with polythene before planting up in peat-free compost – it's an economical alternative to water-retaining gels. A weekly dose of high-potash tomato feed will give you cascades of flowers right through summer.
- Encourage sweet peas to climb by tying them in to their supports.
- Keep an eagle-eye out for bindweed and blast it with a spot weeder. If you mulched your borders in March, the odd annual weed can be hoed off in a trice.
- Grasses and strappy plants, such as Libertias, can become choked up with debris, so to give the new growth a sporting chance, comb them out gently with a gloved hand or plastic hand fork.
- Deadhead spent flowers. Oriental poppies cut back to the ground will respond with fresh new foliage. Be equally fierce about cutting out the faded stems of Euphorbias. Left in place, they soon get tatty and mildewed.
- Aphids can seem to multiply in minutes, so remove them either by rubbing them off by hand or squirting them with an organic spray, such as BugClear Fruit & Veg (many synthetic sprays are harmful to bees). Official advice no longer sanctions sluicing them with a solution of washing-up liquid.

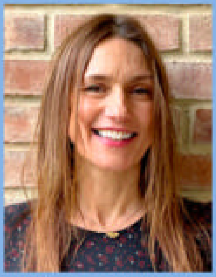
SEE OVER FOR MORE INSPIRATION →

INSPIRING BREAKS

STROLL IN THE ROYAL GARDENS OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE

As all eyes turn to royal matters for the Coronation of King Charles III on 6 May, lovers of horticulture can enjoy a tour of the gardens of His Majesty's Gloucestershire residence, Highgrove House, with its Stumpery, Thyme Walk and Carpet Garden, followed by a cream tea in The Orchard Room. Close by, you can also explore Westonbirt House & Gardens (holfordtrust.com). The house is actually a school, so booking is essential. Westonbirt, The National Arboretum (visit forestry.gov.uk/westonbirt) is separate from Westonbirt House and is booked independently. Stay near the pretty village of Tetbury at The Holford Arms, a 16th-century pub with a choice of accommodation, from rustic rooms to bell tents, luxury chalets and camping.

CHECK IT OUT Spring walks at Highgrove Gardens cost from £22; visit highgrovegardens.com. Double rooms at The Holford Arms cost from £97 a night with breakfast; visit theholfordarms.co.uk.



Carrying on our 'Gardens Special', *Prima*'s contributing travel editor, Jane Anderson, gives her pick of gorgeous gardens to visit. You'll come home bursting with great ideas to try out at home

Hampton Court Palace is a riot of colour in spring

EXPLORE THE HISTORY OF HAMPTON COURT PALACE

The Mitre, a 36-room Grade II-listed boutique hotel, is perfectly poised on the banks of the River Thames for garden enthusiasts looking to explore Hampton Court Palace's world-famous gardens. What's more, hotel guests receive complimentary tickets to the Palace and its spectacular formal gardens, which are home to the world's oldest hedge maze, a record-breaking grapevine and three National Plant Collections – plus a huge variety of wildlife, including the descendants of Henry VIII's deer herd. Other highlights include Queen Mary II's Exoticks, the Kitchen Garden, the Privy Garden and over 1m bulbs in The Wilderness.

CHECK IT OUT Double rooms at The Mitre start from £150 with breakfast and tickets to Hampton Court Palace. Look out for packages to Hampton Court Flower Show in July. Visit mitrehamptoncourt.com. ➜

Feel like royalty in a mini castle on the Scottish Borders

ADMIRE THE CASTLE GARDENS OF SCOTLAND

Crabtree & Crabtree offers high-end yet affordable holiday rentals in Northumberland, Yorkshire and the Scottish Borders, some within private gardens or close to magnificent grounds. The Head Gardener's House at Floors Castle is a spectacular holiday home resembling a mini castle itself, at the corner of a walled garden. Meticulously restored by the Duchess of Roxburghe, it allows guests private access out of official opening hours, as well as the opportunity to explore the striking formal Millennium Garden and the grounds of the castle.

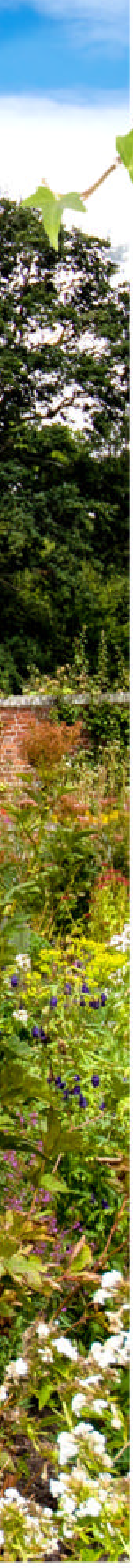
CHECK IT OUT The Head Gardener's House costs from £1,115 a week (sleeps four). Visit crabtreeandcrabtree.com.

FIND A JAPANESE GARDEN IN CHESHIRE

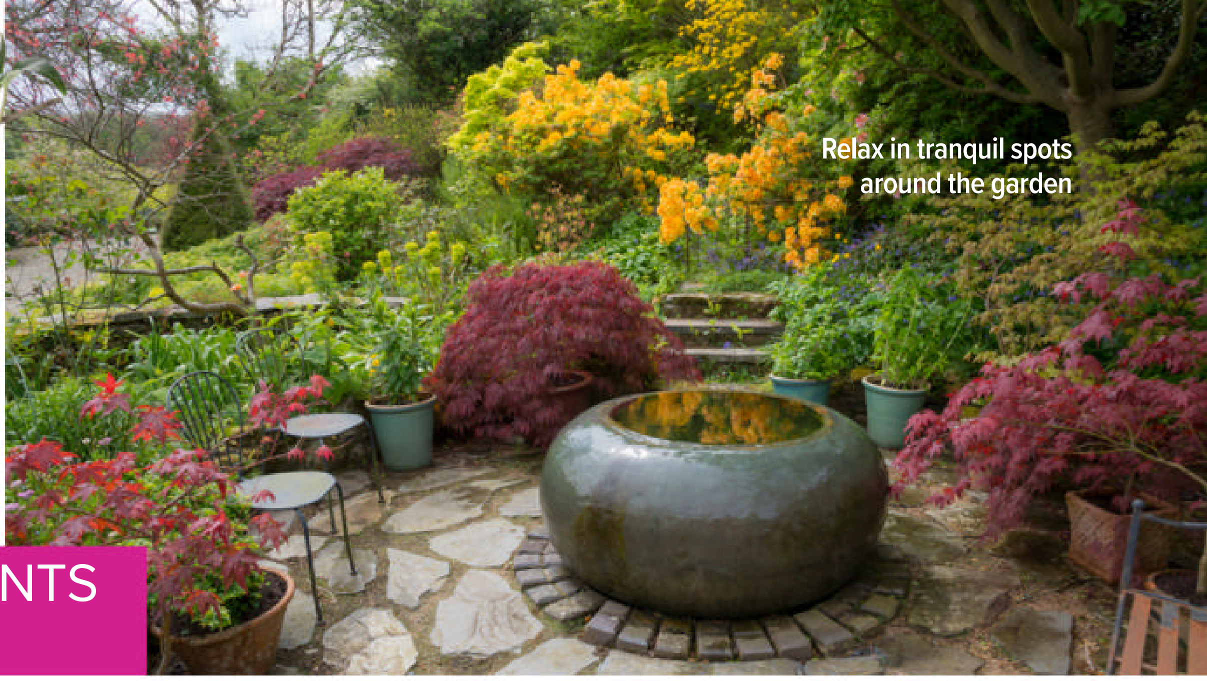
Come to Cheshire at the end of April or early May for the bluebell walks at Arley Hall (arleyhallandgardens.com), or head to Tatton Park (tattonpark.org.uk) for a tour of the award-winning Japanese Garden with head gardener Simon Tetlow – return in July for the RHS Flower Show. Bluebell Cottage Gardens & Nursery (bluebellcottage.co.uk) is a lesser-known gem, with bluebell woods, a wildflower meadow and sumptuous gardens. All these gardens are less than a 30-minute drive from Blakemere Hideaways' new five-star glamping lodges, each with a private hot tub.

CHECK IT OUT Blakemere Hideaways start from £495 for two nights (sleeping four). Visit stayatblakemere.co.uk/glamping-at-blakemere.

Discover the beauty of the Far East in deepest Cheshire



Find peace in a traditional Welsh stone cottage



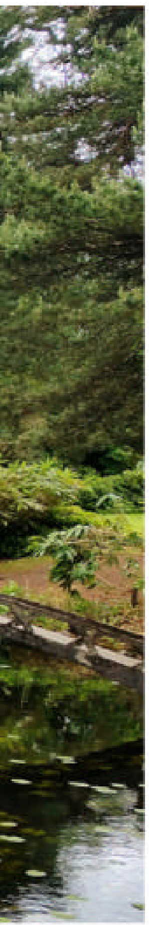
Relax in tranquil spots around the garden

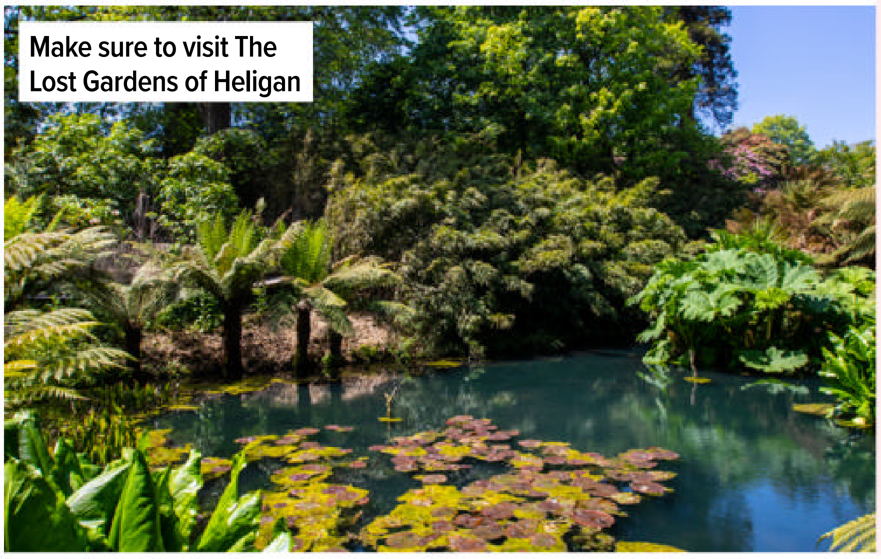
SLEEP AMONG THE PLANTS IN PEMBROKESHIRE

Dipping down into a small country lane, Dyffryn Fernant Garden is a wonderful surprise for garden lovers when they head over the Preseli Hills towards the sea on the north Pembrokeshire coast. Lovingly created over the last two decades by Christina Shand, and overlooking the rocky tor of Garn Fawr, the garden draws inspiration from the hillside, marsh and farm enclosures. There are many areas to explore, such as the Front Garden, with its flamboyant bursts of colour and seasonal container planting, while the Rickyard has swathes of peonies and agapanthus contrasting with the ordered topiary. The atmospheric Bog Garden is anchored by a powerful obelisk. Luckily, Christina has also created Y Bwthyn Bach, a secluded stone-built holiday cottage in the garden where you can overnight among the plants.

CHECK IT OUT Y Bwthyn Bach cottage costs from £356 for up to four nights (sleeps three to four). Up to two dogs welcome at £10 per stay. Visit dyffrynfernant.co.uk.

Cosy up in The Boat House, surrounded by beautiful gardens and meadows



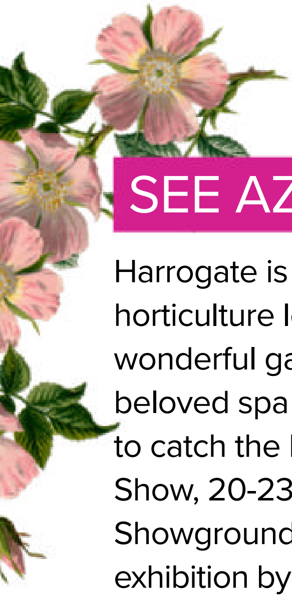


Make sure to visit The Lost Gardens of Heligan

DISCOVER A WATERSIDE RETREAT IN CORNWALL

Cornwall is a hub of horticultural must-sees, from The Lost Gardens of Heligan to the Eden Project. It's also the first place in the UK to see magnolias bloom – usually a month before the rest of the UK. At Pengelly Retreat near St Ives, you can cosy up in the architect-designed Boat House, with wood-burning stove, outdoor fire pit and lakeside bathing. The owners have planted more than 100 trees and thousands of bulbs, so the gardens and meadows are awash with flowers come spring. Don't miss the Secret Garden, with bamboo bridges over waterways and hidden Buddhas.

CHECK IT OUT Pengelly Retreat costs from £153 a night self-catering (sleeps two, minimum three-night stay). Visit pengellyretreat.co.uk. For more inspiration, visit greatgardensofcornwall.co.uk. ➜



SEE AZALEAS IN HARROGATE

Harrogate is a hub of floral delight for horticulture lovers, with a plethora of wonderful gardens in and around this beloved spa town. There's still time to catch the Harrogate Spring Flower Show, 20-23 April, at the Great Yorkshire Showground, to see Britain's biggest exhibition by florists and flower arrangers, plus fantastic garden shopping.

The Yorkshire hotel overlooks the Stray, resplendent with its spring cherry blossom. Take a stroll through Valley Gardens' pretty woodland footpath to the RHS Garden Harlow Carr, which has 58 acres of gardens. Also close by are the Himalayan Garden & Sculpture Park, the North's largest collection of azaleas, rhododendrons and magnolias, along with 80 contemporary sculptures; not forgetting Fountains Abbey and Studley Royal Water Garden. If you fancy staying outside of the town, Rudding Park offers Kitchen Garden Breaks, which include a guided tour of more than 500 herbs, salads, edible flowers and fruits. Guests learn to propagate and pick seasonal crops and get to plant their own planter using Rudding Park salad leaf mix.

Visit the RHS Garden Harlow Carr, and see the cherry blossom on the Stray (below right)

CHECK IT OUT Double rooms at The Yorkshire start from £98 during the Flower Show; visit the-yorkshire.co.uk. Kitchen Garden Breaks at Rudding Park cost £399 for two, including meals, kitchen garden tour and entry to RHS Harlow Carr; visit ruddingpark.co.uk. Entry to the Harrogate Spring Flower Show costs £21.50; visit flowershow.org.uk. For more on Harrogate gardens, go to visitharrogate.co.uk.

VISIT MALVERN'S SPRING FESTIVAL

For a quick fix of gardening joy, Just Go! Holidays offers an overnight coach trip to the RHS Malvern Spring Festival on 13 May, featuring stunning show gardens by top designers exploring the latest trends. Expert talks and demonstrations offer hints and tips for every budget. Just Go! also offers a four-night exploration of the gardens of the Brecon Beacons from 25 June, visiting the National Botanic Garden of Wales and the flower meadows of Newton House.

CHECK IT OUT The two-day Malvern break costs from £149pp, including return coach travel from selected pick-up points around England, one night's accommodation with breakfast and dinner, and admission to the RHS Malvern Spring Festival, with coach transfers from the hotel. The five-day Brecon Beacons trip costs from £725pp. Visit justgoholidays.com.

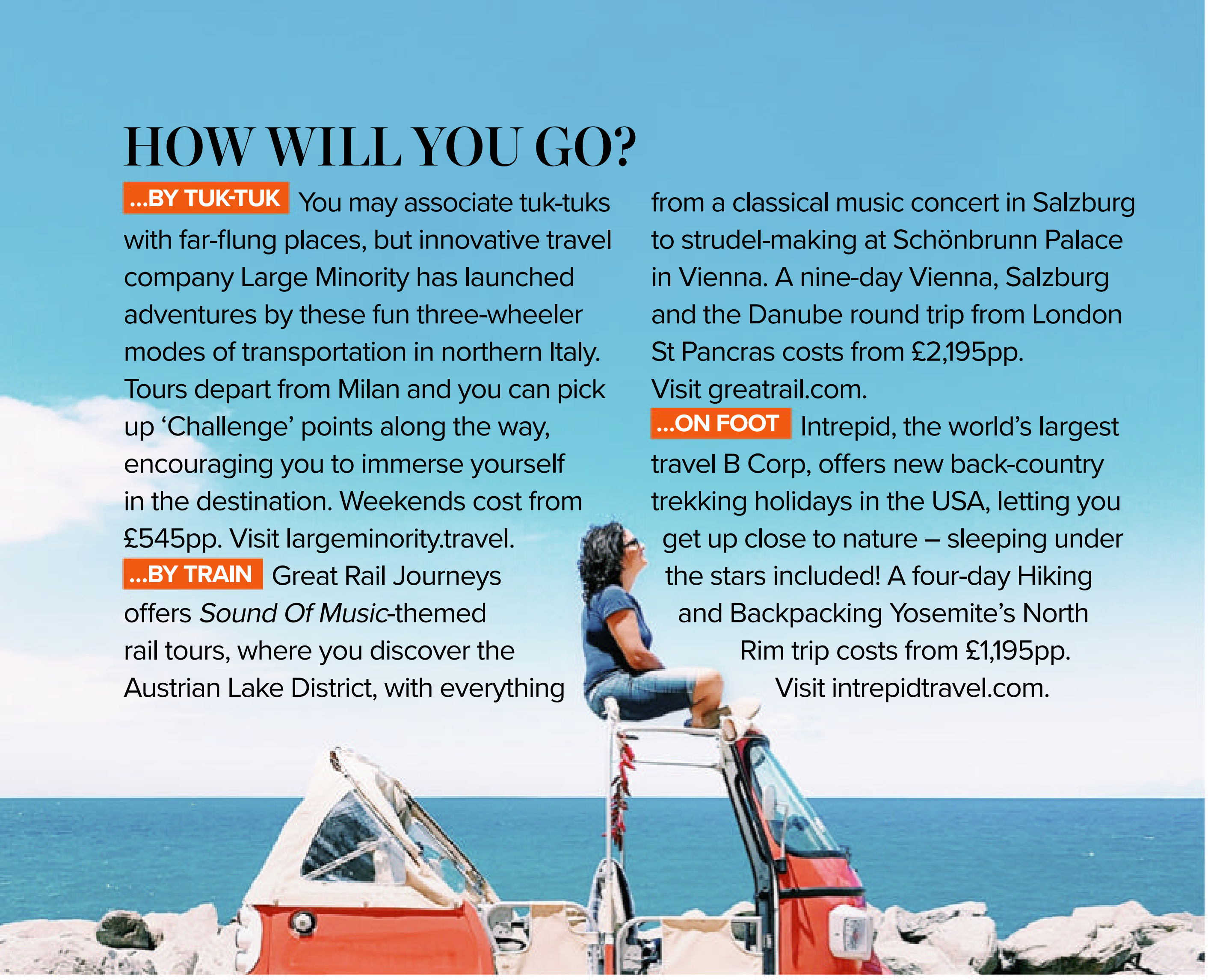
The Malvern Hills is an area of outstanding natural beauty, where you can visit the RHS Malvern Spring Festival (right)

Photography Robert Smith, Charlotte Gale, Tracey Bloxham, RHS/Neil Hepworth, Ian Kingsworth, Getty

THE LATEST NEWS AND INSPIRATION

Plan it, book it, LOVE IT!

Holiday inspiration from our travel editor, Jane Anderson

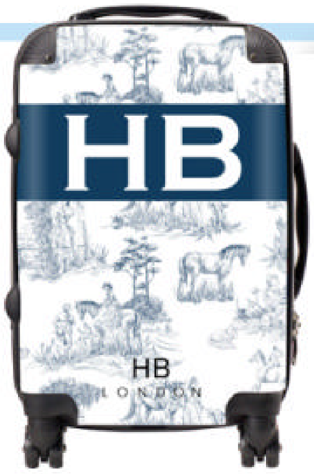


HOW WILL YOU GO?

...BY TUK-TUK You may associate tuk-tuks with far-flung places, but innovative travel company Large Minority has launched adventures by these fun three-wheeler modes of transportation in northern Italy. Tours depart from Milan and you can pick up 'Challenge' points along the way, encouraging you to immerse yourself in the destination. Weekends cost from £545pp. Visit largeminority.travel.

...BY TRAIN Great Rail Journeys offers *Sound Of Music*-themed rail tours, where you discover the Austrian Lake District, with everything from a classical music concert in Salzburg to strudel-making at Schönbrunn Palace in Vienna. A nine-day Vienna, Salzburg and the Danube round trip from London St Pancras costs from £2,195pp. Visit greatrail.com.

...ON FOOT Intrepid, the world's largest travel B Corp, offers new back-country trekking holidays in the USA, letting you get up close to nature – sleeping under the stars included! A four-day Hiking and Backpacking Yosemite's North Rim trip costs from £1,195pp. Visit intrepidtravel.com.



Best buy

I love HB London's new Toile range of monogrammed luggage. Small carry-on, from £125, hblondon.uk.

SEE TUSCANY FOR LESS

It's rare to locate an affordable place to stay in Tuscany, so the new Orlando Chianti parc is a find. It offers three pools, Italian cookery lessons and hiking and mountain bike trails nearby. Seven nights in a two-bedroom Azure Cosy Lounge Holiday Home (sleeps four) from 3 June costs from £466. Visit eurocamp.co.uk.

Experience the delights of Tuscany

3 of the BEST

UK stays that won't break the bank

The Bracken Hide (brackenhide.co.uk) is a new wilderness hotel on the Isle of Skye. Blending modern style with environmental values, it has 45 cabins, a whisky bar, Nordic saunas and wild swimming. Doubles from £150 a night, with breakfast.

Set in the coastal village of Rhosneigr in Anglesey, Driftwood (rhosneigr.co.uk) is a new boutique guesthouse combining luxury standards with a warm Welsh welcome. Doubles from £100 a night, including breakfast.

The National Trust (nationaltrust.org.uk) has added Wicken Rose Cottage in Cambridgeshire to its portfolio of places to stay. Enjoy scenic walks and spot free-roaming Konik ponies and Highland cattle. Sleeps two; three nights from £390.

Photography Mike Henton/National Trust Images, Athena Zelandonii, Stuart Stead Getty. Prices correct at time of going to press

prima HOLIDAYS

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Jo

JO CHECKLEY
EDITOR

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ABTA The Travel Association
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TRIPSMITHS

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Sail the MEDITERRANEAN *in style with* JAMES MARTIN

Sail around French and Italian ports, and watch a cooking demo by the popular TV chef

MEET YOUR SPECIAL GUEST

James has presented several cookery TV shows including *James Martin's American Adventure* and *Saturday Kitchen.*

Sail on board Royal Clipper, a spectacular five-masted, full-rigged sailing ship, to explore the Italian and French Rivieras. You'll dock at some of the Mediterranean's most stylish ports, including Cannes, Alghero and Saint-Tropez.

Any voyage on board Royal Clipper is bound to be memorable, but this special seven-night cruise has a carefully curated itinerary designed to coincide with Les Voiles de Saint-Tropez regatta, which you can watch from the deck.

James Martin will join you on board to give a cooking demo and take part in a Q&A session. James will also host a cocktail party, sign copies of his book and join guests to watch the regatta.

Royal Clipper will sail to beautiful locations, departing from the harbour of Cannes and travelling to Lerici in Italy and Portoferraio on the island of Elba, where you can take a vineyard tour and sample local Ansonica wine. You'll also stop on Corsica, France's

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Set sail on the luxurious Royal Clipper

LIMITED PLACES ON THIS NEW TRIP WITH OUR FAVOURITE TV CHEF

Experience the regatta in glittering Saint-Tropez

Visit the glamorous city of Cannes

A good night's sleep awaits in a comfortable cabin aboard Royal Clipper

'Ile de Beauté', and the port of Alghero on Sardinia, where you'll have the opportunity to explore its medieval history and taste the local cuisine.

Reasons to book

MEET JAMES MARTIN

James will impress guests with his skills in an exclusive cooking demonstration on board. He'll host a cocktail party, book signing and Q&A session, and join guests to watch the Saint-Tropez regatta.

EXPLORE THE RIVIERA

Set sail on a nautical adventure to the French and Italian Rivieras, including destinations such as Elba, Corsica and Sardinia. You'll visit many different ports – sometimes two in one day!

SAIL ON A SPLENDID YACHT

Royal Clipper is a design masterpiece, featuring 42 sails and hosting just 227 guests in luxurious cabins. Spend time on the deck or in the elegant piano bar.

Wander the streets of Alghero, Sardinia

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 Arrive in Nice **DAY 2** Cannes **DAY 3** Lerici **DAY 4** Portoferraio **DAY 5** Corsica and Bonifacio **DAY 6** Alghero **DAY 7** Saint-Tropez **DAY 8** Saint-Tropez **DAY 9** Arrive in Cannes and disembark

YOU WILL GET THE CHANCE TO...

- Watch an exclusive cooking demonstration by James Martin.
- Take part in a Q&A session and cocktail reception with James.
- Spend seven nights on board Royal Clipper with breakfasts, lunches, six-course à la carte dinners, afternoon snacks and midnight snacks provided daily.
- Receive a free copy of James's book ahead of departure.
- See the Saint-Tropez regatta.
- Visit some of the Mediterranean's most stylish ports.
- Stay in a four-star hotel in Nice (pre-cruise).

ALSO INCLUDED

Return flights from London; group arrival and departure transfers; port fees.

HOW TO BOOK

PRICE: From £2,485pp*

DATES: 22 to 30 September 2023

TO BOOK, CALL 02045 862 686, quoting PRIMA CLIPPERS APR23

VISIT prima.co.uk/martinclipper

for more details and to see the full itinerary

*Price based on two people sharing an entry-level cabin, including all relevant discounts, subject to availability. Deposit: 30%. Single supplement: £995. Price and itinerary correct at time of print but may be subject to change. Local charges such as tourist tax may apply. In the case of unforeseen circumstances, expert(s) may be substituted, and any expert-led events may be subject to change. Expert(s) will not join you for your full trip duration unless otherwise stated. Travel insurance is not included but required for most of our overseas trips, and should be taken out at time of booking. Images used may not reflect your actual tour experience. Tour is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of TS Travel Limited (ATOL-bonded)

DISCOVER MORE FINANCIALLY PROTECTED HOLIDAYS at PRIMAHOLIDAYS.CO.UK

READER OFFER

Explore vibrant MARRAKECH

Stay in traditional accommodation in the city known for its souks, spices and snake charmers

With year-round warm weather, mouthwatering food and a captivating history reflected in its opulent Moorish architecture, Morocco is a brilliant location for a cultural yet relaxing getaway. Take a trip to Marrakech and stay in a stylish riad, set against the backdrop of the Atlas Mountains. There'll be time to explore the bustling medina, marvel at snake charmers, fortune tellers and musicians in Jemaa el-Fnaa square and watch the sun set behind the Koutoubia mosque. And on your first night, you will enjoy a delicious Moroccan dinner.

Reasons to book

ENJOY MOROCCAN FOOD

From the traditional tagine, a hearty stew, to b'stilla, a fragrantly spiced pastry, there is so much to taste.

TRADITIONAL STAY

A few steps from Jemaa el-Fnaa, Riad Nesma boasts a sundeck, wellness area and sauna. Each room has a private bathroom, TV and radio, and some overlook the patio.

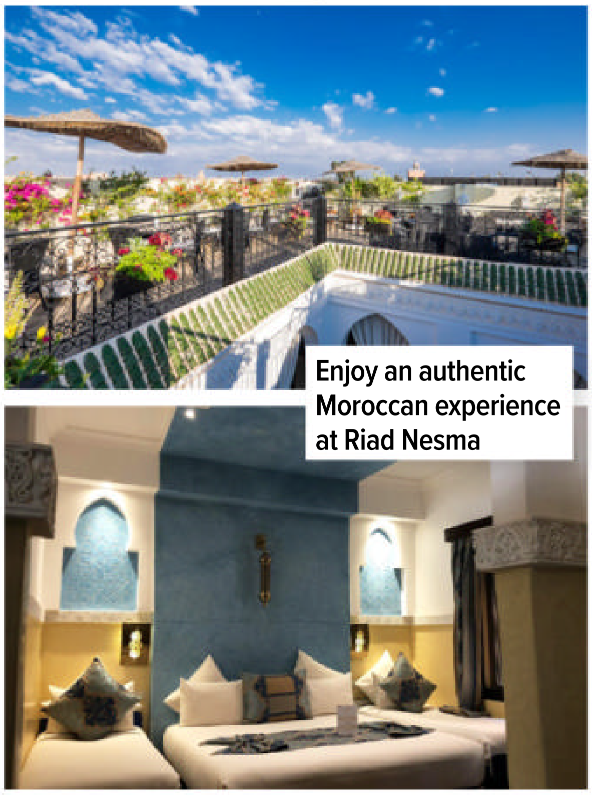
STAY IN THE HEART OF THE RED CITY

OPTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Try hot-air ballooning to view the Atlas Mountains, go quad biking in the Jbilets Desert or join a cookery class.

Bag a bargain in the souks

Learn to cook Moroccan food



Enjoy an authentic Moroccan experience at Riad Nesma

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 Arrive in Marrakech

DAY 2 Medina tour **DAY 3** At leisure

DAY 4 Depart Marrakech

YOU WILL GET THE CHANCE TO...

- Spend four days in Marrakech.
- Take a guided tour of the old medina.
- Enjoy three breakfasts and a welcome dinner in a typical Moroccan restaurant.

ALSO INCLUDED

Local guide for excursions; group airport transfers; return flights from London Gatwick.

HOW TO BOOK

PRICE: From £475pp*

DATES: 8 to 11 May 2023, 14 to 17 June 2023 (other dates available in 2023)

TO BOOK, CALL 020 4586 3478, quoting PRIMA MARRAKECH APR23

VISIT prima.co.uk/riadnesma

for more details and to see the full itinerary

*From price is per person, based on two people sharing a room on an 8 May departure, subject to availability. Price and itinerary correct at time of print but may be subject to change. Single supplement on request. Deposit 20% plus flights. Local charges, such as tourist tax, may apply. Travel insurance is not included but compulsory for this trip and should be taken out at time of booking. Images used may not reflect your actual experience. This holiday may be sold through other selected brands. Stay is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of TS Travel (ATOL-bonded).

TS TOURS

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EXCLUSIVE PACKAGE

FLIGHTS AND TRANSFERS INCLUDED

Take a two-week THAI ODYSSEY *across city, jungle and beach*

Compare the energy of Bangkok with the serenity of a tented camp at Elephant Hills and a week on the beach

Beautiful and intriguing Thailand is a land of diversity, from the man-made modernity of Bangkok to the rural heartland and oh-so glorious beaches, famed for their pristine beauty.

You'll see all sides of Thailand on our two-week adventure. It begins in a smart five-star Bangkok hotel, perfectly positioned for three days exploring this noisy and joyous metropolis. A calmer atmosphere awaits when you fly south to Elephant Hills to stay in a luxury tented camp for three nights. You'll meet the elephants, hike through the rainforest and cook authentic Thai dishes. Finally, you'll swap the jungle for the beach, spending a week in a gorgeous resort.

Reasons to book

GET TO KNOW BANGKOK

Spend three days in this dazzling city, seeing its skyscrapers sitting alongside Thailand's ornate temples. Taste the street food and discover its markets selling all manner of curiosities.

MEET THAI ELEPHANTS

Stay in an incredible tented camp and see some of the nation's most captivating wildlife in the jungle, where you'll meet the elephants and get to feed them.

RELAX ON THE BEACH

After the excitement of Bangkok and a jungle adventure, relax on the beach for a week and enjoy the tropical scenery.

Experience beautiful temples and wildlife

TS TOURS

OUR TRAVEL PARTNER TS Tours Ltd is the UK's leading specialist in creating bespoke tours, cruises and rail journeys in the company of experts. All flight-inclusive trips are ATOL-protected and financially bonded.

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 to 4 Bangkok **DAY 5 to 7** Elephant Hills, Khao Sok **DAY 8 to 14** Apsara Beachfront Resort & Villa, Khao Lak **DAY 15 to 16** Phuket to London

YOU WILL GET THE CHANCE TO...

- Spend three nights B&B in The Landmark Bangkok in a Premium room.
- Stay full-board in Elephant Hills' luxury tented camp in the Thai jungle for three nights.
- Relax in the beachfront Apsara Beachfront Resort & Villa in Khao Lak for seven nights B&B.
- Meet and feed the elephants at Elephant Hills' conservation park.
- Learn how to cook authentic Thai specialities at a cooking demonstration.

ALSO INCLUDED

Return flights from London to Bangkok with Thai Airways, return flights from Bangkok to Phuket, transfers to and from airports and accommodation throughout.

HOW TO BOOK

PRICE: From £2,079pp*

DATES: 11 to 26 May, 18 May to 2 June, 25 May to 9 June, 1 to 16 October 2023

(please enquire for November and December dates)

TO BOOK, CALL 020 4586 2579, quoting PRIMA ELEPHANT HILLS APR23

VISIT prima.co.uk/elephanthills

for more details and to see the full itinerary

*From price is per person, based on two people sharing a room on an 11 May 2023 departure, subject to availability. Price and itinerary correct at time of print but may be subject to change. Single supplement on request. Deposit £500. Local charges such as tourist tax may apply. Travel insurance is not included but required for most of our overseas trips, and should be taken out at time of booking. Images used may not reflect your actual tour experience. This holiday may be sold through other selected brands. Tour is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of TS Travel Ltd (ATOL bonded) and THG Travel Limited ATOL 9528 – ABTA Y6433.

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READER OFFER

Discover the cities and beaches of NORTHERN SPAIN on a luxury cruise

Set sail for Getxo, Bilbao and A Coruña on a luxury ship with two pools, a spa and evening entertainment

Northern Spain is loved for its landscapes, gastronomy, elegant cities, quaint villages and long golden beaches. It's also packed with cultural attractions to explore, with art and architecture to discover at every turn.

This luxury five-night cruise over the August bank holiday weekend will take you to some of northern Spain's highlights as you sail in style on the cruise ship Bolette. On board, enjoy fabulous facilities including the Atlantis Spa, a two-tiered entertainment theatre and elegant dining venues. Even better, *Prima* readers will receive an exclusive £100pp discount.

Your first stop will be the Basque Country port of Getxo, with spectacular beaches and the UNESCO-listed Vizcaya Bridge. You'll then head to Bilbao, followed by magnificent A Coruña in Galicia, where you can enjoy the fascinating contrast between the medieval old town and the modern city.

Reasons to book

EXCELLENT FOOD AND DRINK

All food is included while on Bolette. The menu changes daily, and includes steak, seafood, fresh soups, pasta and salads, plus breads made in the on-board bakery.

DISCOVER BILBAO

With intriguing architecture and a celebrated dining scene, there's plenty to explore, including the 14th-century Gothic-style Santiago Cathedral.

LUXURY WELLNESS FACILITIES

Indulge in some treatments at Bolette's Atlantis Spa, then kick back in the two Jacuzzis and swimming pools.

SAIL AWAY THIS AUGUST BANK HOLIDAY AND SAVE £100pp*

Cruise in style aboard Bolette

YOUR ITINERARY

DAY 1 Depart Southampton **DAY 2** At sea **DAY 3** Getxo and Bilbao **DAY 4** A Coruña **DAY 5** At sea **DAY 6** Return to Southampton

YOU WILL GET THE CHANCE TO...

- Receive a £100pp discount exclusive to *Prima* readers.
- Spend five nights in a stylish cabin on Bolette.
- Dine on a tempting choice of cuisine served on board, with five-course à la carte dinners, casual breakfast and lunch buffets, and late-night snacks included.
- Have unlimited self-service tea and coffee available 24 hours a day plus complimentary afternoon tea with sandwiches and cakes, and in-room sandwiches and snacks.
- Enjoy a full programme of evening entertainment, with cabaret shows, comedy, dancing and live music.
- Make full use of the ship's leisure facilities, including swimming pools, Jacuzzis and a gym, plus a wide choice of activities and lectures.

ALSO INCLUDED

All UK port taxes; luggage porterage between your cabin and the drop-off and pick-up points; formal welcome and/or captain's drinks party and gala buffet.

HOW TO BOOK

PRICE: From £695pp*
DATES: 25 to 30 August 2023
TO BOOK, CALL 02045 254 995, quoting
PRIMA SPAIN CRUISE APR23
VISIT prima.co.uk/bolettespain
for more details and to see the full itinerary

*From price is per person, based on two people sharing an interior cabin, subject to availability; includes all discounts. Price and itinerary correct at time of print but may be subject to change. Single supplement applies. Deposit 20%. Local charges such as tourist tax may apply. Travel insurance is not included but required for most of our overseas trips and should be taken out at time of booking. This holiday may be sold through other selected brands. Images used may not reflect your actual tour experience. Tour is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of TS Travel Ltd (ATOL-bonded).

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PRIMA HOLIDAYS

EXCLUSIVE TOURS

TWO GREAT RAIL JOURNEYS TO REMEMBER

Take a steam-powered ride through the SCOTTISH HIGHLANDS

See Scotland's stunning scenery on three unforgettable modes of transport, including the iconic Jacobite steam train

Take to the water on PS Waverley

Take a steam-powered journey through the scenic Trossachs on this exclusive trip. Pass over the spectacular Glenfinnan Viaduct on The Jacobite steam train; cross the Firth of Clyde and see Ben Nevis aboard paddle steamer Waverley; and sail on Loch Katrine on Lady of the Lake. You will spend three nights at the charming three-star Winnock Hotel, Drymen, an 18th-century inn near Loch Lomond.

YOU WILL GET THE CHANCE TO...

- Spend three nights at the three-star Winnock Hotel, Drymen, including breakfasts and dinners (with wine).
- Ride on the Falkirk Wheel boat lift.
- Journey on PS Waverley**.
- Travel on The Jacobite steam train, on the Fort William to Mallaig line.
- Sail on Lady of the Lake.

ALSO INCLUDED

Return flights from London Stansted to Edinburgh†; comfortable coach travel throughout.

PRICE: From £1,095pp*

DATES: 24 to 27 June and 13 to 16 July 2023

TO BOOK, CALL 01334 441 822, quoting PRIMA STEAM APR23

VISIT prima.co.uk/scotlandbysteam

for more details and to see the full itinerary

*From price is per person, based on two people sharing a double room, subject to availability and based on 24 June 2023 departure date. Price and itinerary correct at time of print but may be subject to change. July departure supplement: £30. Single supplement: £90. Deposit required. Local charges, such as tourist tax, may apply. **Subject to confirmation of PS Waverley's sailing schedule. Travel insurance is not included. †Flights from other airports and/or overnight accommodation before/after the tour available on request and at a supplement; £100pp discount for customers who make their own way to the pick-up point at Edinburgh Airport or to the Falkirk Wheel. Images used may not reflect your actual tour experience. This holiday may be sold through other selected brands. Tour is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of Brightwater Holidays (ATOL 4498)

brightwater holidays

OUR TRAVEL PARTNER Brightwater Holidays is an award-winning operator specialising in garden and special-interest escorted tours worldwide.

Discover Lake Como, St Moritz and the BERNINA RAILWAY

Enjoy a week on the shores of Lake Como, go on a lake cruise and ride the iconic Bernina Railway to St Moritz

Visit the beautiful town of Varenna

Lake Como is one of the most picturesque Italian lakes. This trip includes a seven-night stay in Colico, on its shore. You'll have time to unwind with three full days at leisure, admire the scenery and explore towns and villages. You'll take both a boat and a coach tour of Lake Como; a coach trip to Varenna; and travel on the Bernina Railway through alpine scenery to St Moritz in Switzerland.

YOU WILL GET THE CHANCE TO...

- Stay for seven nights at top-rated Hotel Risi.
- Have three full days at leisure.
- Enjoy seven breakfasts, seven three-course dinners and five three-course lunches at the hotel**.
- Travel on the Bernina Railway to St Moritz (lunch at St Moritz included).
- Cruise Lake Como on a private boat.
- Join excursions to Lake Como and Varenna and enjoy lunch in Como.

ALSO INCLUDED

Return flights from London, rail tickets and road transport.

PRICE: From £1,625pp**

DATES: 8 to 15 May, 5 to 12 June, 24 to 31 October and 4 to 11 December 2023

TO BOOK, CALL 02081 316 215, quoting PRIMA BERNINA APR23

VISIT prima.co.uk/bernina

for more details and to see the full itinerary

*From price is per person, based on two people sharing a room on 24 October 2023 departure, subject to availability. Price and itinerary correct at time of print but subject to change. Lake-view upgrade available. **Water, coffee and ¼ bottle wine included per meal. Single supplement £235pp for a standard room. Deposit: 30%. Local charges, such as tourist tax, may apply. Travel insurance is not included but required for most of our overseas trips and should be taken out at time of booking. Images used may not reflect actual tour experience. Holiday may be sold through other selected brands. Tour is operated by and subject to the booking conditions of TS Travel Limited (ATOL-bonded).

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Your time off & time out

The *hot* LIST

5 TREATS YOU CAN'T MISS!

STREAM

LUTHER: THE FALLEN SUN

Three years after the BBC One series ended, Idris Elba is dusting off his famous trench coat to play the 'brilliant but disgraced' detective John Luther in this feature-length spin-off. Having last seen Luther heading to prison, he's now breaking out and doing what he does best: tracking down a serial killer, played by a sinister Andy Serkis. **Netflix**

THEATRE

A LITTLE LIFE

Grantchester star James Norton leads this highly anticipated stage show based on the bestselling novel by Hanya Yanagihara. Four college friends are challenged by ambition, addiction and betrayal. **25 March to 18 June; haroldpintertheatre.co.uk**

FILM

ALLELUJAH

Judi Dench and Jennifer Saunders team up for a film adaptation of Alan Bennett's heartwarming play. When an underfunded geriatric ward faces closure, the hospital's staff fight back, inviting a news crew to film their preparations for a special concert. **In cinemas from 17 March**

EXHIBITION

TARTAN

It's no surprise that the first major exhibition curated by the V&A Dundee is all about Scotland's most famous and beloved textile: tartan. Explore the history and tradition of this unique pattern that has come to represent so much more than a piece of cloth. **From 1 April; vam.ac.uk**

Be inspired by the rules of the grid

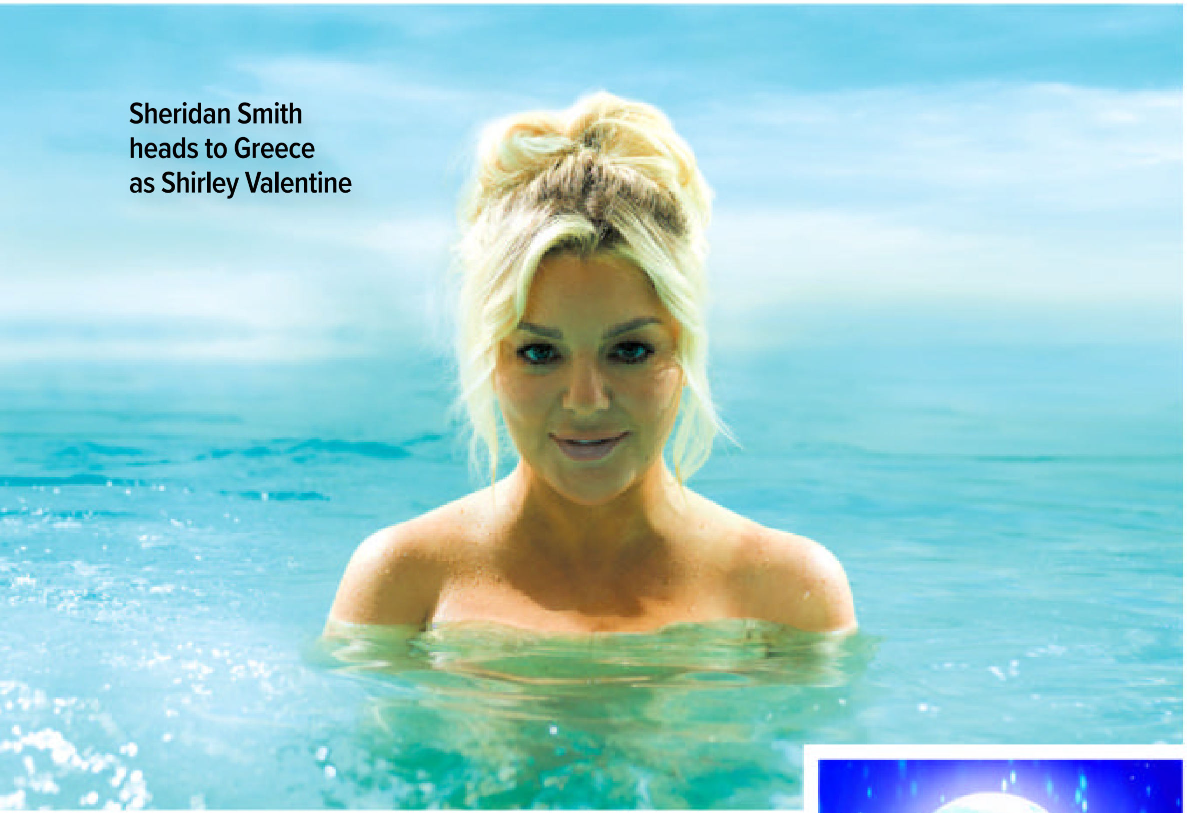
TV

UNFORGOTTEN

Sanjeev Bhaskar is back as Detective Sunil Khan for the fifth series of this addictive crime drama – and he's joined by a new partner, DCI Jessica James (Sinéad Keenan). But will she be able to focus after a family tragedy occurs? **ITV**

HAVE YOU HEARD? A biopic about the late singer Amy Winehouse,

Words Charlotte Oliver **Photography** John Wilson/Netflix, V&A Dundee, Trustees of the Natural History Museum, Charlie Gray, James Eckersley, Getty



Sheridan Smith heads to Greece as Shirley Valentine

Dig out your glad rags for Henley

HENLEY FESTIVAL

Gaze in awe at *Life Of Pi*

Prima planner

The must-have tickets to nab...

SHREK THE MUSICAL *21 July 2023 to 21 April 2024; shrekuktour.com*

Based on the Oscar-winning animated film, this laugh-out-loud musical is touring the UK, following the famous green ogre on his quest to find true love.

SHIRLEY VALENTINE *Until 3 June; shirleyvalentineonstage.com*

Sheridan Smith storms the West End stage in this show about a Liverpudlian mum who books a life-changing ticket to Greece.

HENLEY FESTIVAL 2023 *5 July to 9 July; henley-festival.co.uk*

The UK's only boutique black tie festival is back, with five nights of music, comedy, fireworks and world-class food.

TITANOSAUR: LIFE AS THE BIGGEST DINOSAUR *31 March 2023 to 7 January 2024; nhm.ac.uk*

For the first time ever, a life-size cast of the biggest dinosaur to have ever lived – the Patagotitan mayorum – will be going on display at London's Natural History Museum. See it to believe it!

LIFE OF PI *29 August 2023 to 20 July 2024; lifeofpionstage.com*

Don't miss this beloved play – based on Yann Martel's novel about a boy stranded on a boat – as it tours the country.

Embark on a roar-some journey back in time

Staying in with... ROSEMARY SHRAGER

We ask the TV chef and writer how she enjoys a night in...

Rosemary, 72, lives in East Sussex. She has two grown-up children, Kate and Tom.

My ideal night in begins with... A delicious takeaway from my local Indian, Simply Indian, and either a good film or *Coronation Street* on TV.

I'll invite along... Some very close girlfriends so I can get comfortable in my pyjamas.

I'll be eating... Now, this is very important. Peshwari naan, sizzling garlic prawns, onion bhaji, tarka dhal and either prawn or chicken tandoori.

And drinking... Either a lager or a diet coke.

My best-ever dinner party was... I've hosted so many! But my latest one, just before Christmas, was very special. I decided to pull out all the stops and cooked a big Sunday lunch of oxtail, fillet of beef and a big lemon tart for pudding. We sat for hours and hours, talking and eating.

My worst dinner party was... About 40 years ago, I burnt the bananas I was preparing for dessert. I was so upset, but I've never repeated the mistake!

Top of my party playlist is... Jack Johnson, Blue and Joni Mitchell. I love singing while I cook.

My current boxset of choice is... *Happy Valley*. I really like Sarah Lancashire.

I'll hit the hay at... I try to be asleep by midnight, but invariably I'll end up watching a boxset and not go to sleep until 3am.

My best hangover cure is... Lots of water before bed followed by a big breakfast of bacon and tomatoes the next morning.

- *The Proof In The Pudding (Constable) by Rosemary Shrager is out 23 February*

titled Back To Black, is coming to the big screen (predicted in 2024)

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VITABIOTICS

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Menopace® Original contains **22 nutrients**, including **Vitamin B6** which contributes to the **regulation of hormonal activity** and the **reduction of tiredness** and **fatigue.**

***Nielsen GB ScanTrack** Total Coverage Value & Unit Retail Sales 52 w/e 08/10/22. UK's No1. Menopause brand. To verify contact Vitabiotics Ltd, 1 Apsley Way, London NW2 7HF.

Britain's No.1* supplements

QUEEN'S AWARD
4 TIMES WINNER

VITABIOTICS

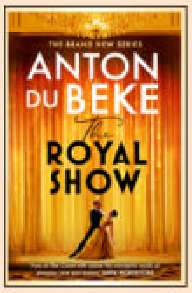
Photography: David Venni / Chilli Media

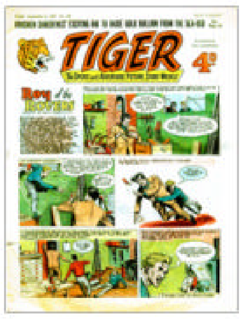
My life in books

'I love reading to my children'

Strictly judge Anton Du Beke shares the books that have shaped his life

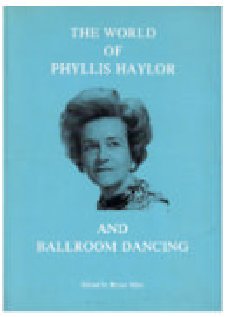
Anton Du Beke has been on our screens since the launch of *Strictly Come Dancing* in 2004, becoming a judge in 2021. Last year, he won a National Television Award for most popular talent show judge. Anton has also released five novels – his sixth, *The Royal Show,* is published in March. 'I've always loved stories, so writing books has been very enjoyable,' he says. 'I love listening to audiobooks when I'm travelling from show to show.' Anton, 56, lives in Buckinghamshire with his wife, Hannah, and twins, Henrietta and George, five. Here, he shares the books that have most impacted him.





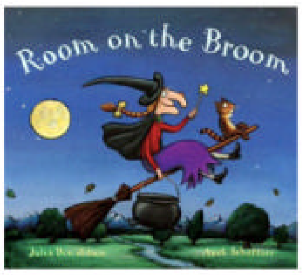
The stories that shaped my childhood...

Roy Of The Rovers
This was a comic strip about the experiences of a footballer, and later manager, called Roy Race. I loved those stories when I was young. Devouring those comics was a huge part of my childhood.



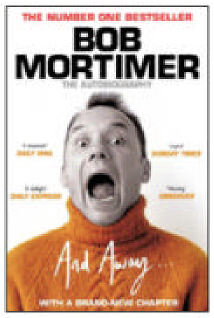
The book I read over and over again...

***The World Of Phyllis Haylor And Ballroom Dancing* edited by Bryan Allen**
I enjoy looking through old dance technique books, and this is a particular favourite. Phyllis Haylor was a ballroom dancing pioneer, and it features her favourite steps and figures, together with wonderful pictures of famous dancers. It's the most brilliant book.



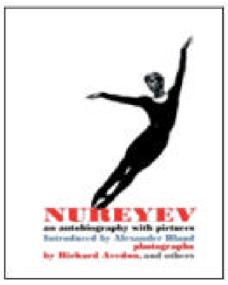
The book I read to my children...

***Room On The Broom* by Julia Donaldson**
This is Henrietta and George's favourite Julia Donaldson book to read together. It makes them laugh every time, and we love all the animals, especially the very enthusiastic dog. Reading has become even more important since I've had kids. Reading with them is fabulous, and I'm excited to explore different books.



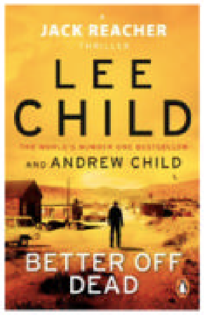
The book that makes me smile...

***And Away...* by Bob Mortimer**
This one really made me laugh. I've always loved Bob Mortimer's humour, and his memoir contains brilliant stories that only Bob could tell. If you listen to the audiobook, as I did, you'll find his voices are brilliant!



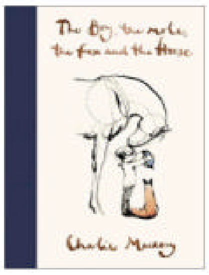
The book that helped me through a tough time...

***Nureyev: An Autobiography With Pictures* by Rudolf Nureyev**
At a tough point in my dancing career, I read Nureyev's autobiography and it was an inspiration. He's often thought of as the greatest male ballet dancer of his generation, so reading about his life and struggles was really helpful.



My favourite book character...

It's got to be Jack Reacher, the US Army major turned PI from Lee Child's crime thriller novels. I have a man crush on him!



The book that (nearly) made me cry...

***The Boy, The Mole, The Fox And The Horse* by Charlie Mackesy**
I rarely cry at books, but this wonderful story moved me close to tears. It's about four friends who share a deep, unshakeable bond, and it's incredibly heartwarming. The TV animation at Christmas was exceptional, too.

- *The Royal Show (Orion, £18.99) by Anton Du Beke is published on 2 March*

Words Ella Dove **Photography** Rex/Shutterstock

Get into the GOOD BOOKS

Prima's books editor **Nina Pottell**
highlights this month's best new reads

READ
MORE
BOOKS

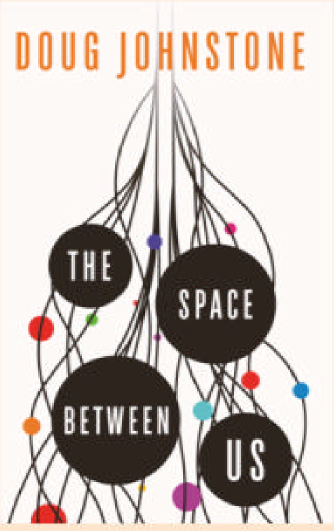
NINA'S NEW HAIR

We're thrilled to have these fabulous new pics of Nina with her stunning 'natural' hair colour. Nina says: 'I've had so many positive comments and I am loving my new look!'

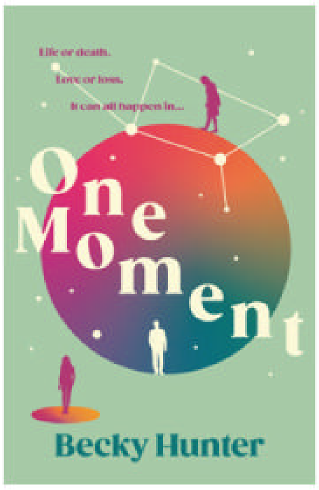
My book of the month

The Space Between Us

by Doug Johnstone *(Orenda Books, £9.99)*


DOUG JOHNSTONE
THE
SPACE
BETWEEN
US

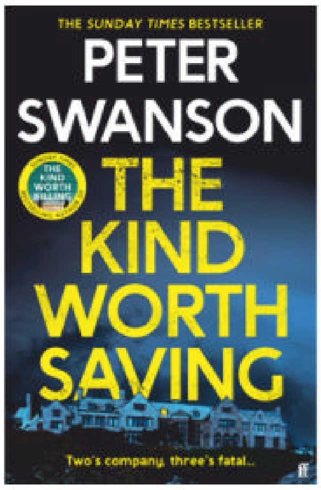
The best books are those you start and can't put down. I went to sleep one night thinking about the story and characters and they were the first things in my head when I woke up. Three strangers are connected by a stroke they each recover from overnight after seeing dazzling lights over Edinburgh. Throw in an extraterrestrial and government officials and you have *ET* meets John Wyndham. A life-affirming read. **16 March**


Life or death.
Love or loss.
It can all happen in...
One Moment
Becky Hunter

One Moment

by Becky Hunter *(Corvus, £14.99)*

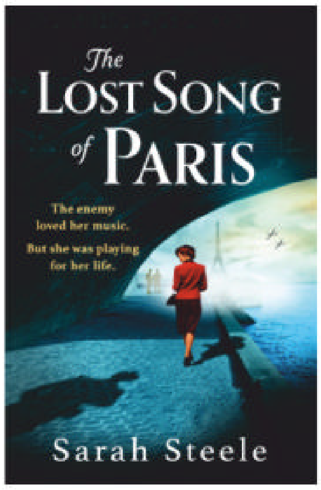
I loved this! A real 'what if...?' book that will make you think about the choices we make in our lives. Evie, Scarlett and Nate are thrown together after a tragic accident, with Scarlett caught in a weird limbo after she dies. It's full of heart and humour, and the characters are all so well written. I'm excited to see what this author brings us next after this debut. **2 March**


THE SUNDAY TIMES BESTSELLER
PETER SWANSON
THE KIND WORTH KILLING
THE KIND WORTH SAVING
Two's company, three's fatal...

The Kind Worth Saving

by Peter Swanson *(Faber, £14.99)*

I cheered when I received this as *The Kind Worth Killing* is one of my favourite thrillers, and now I had a sequel to read; how great it was to be reunited with Lily and Kimball. Private detective Kimball enlists Lily's help when he's asked to investigate an ex-pupil's adulterous husband, but things aren't quite what they seem. Do read *The Kind Worth Killing* if you haven't. **2 March**


The Lost Song of Paris
The enemy loved her music.
But she was playing for her life.
Sarah Steele

The Lost Song Of Paris

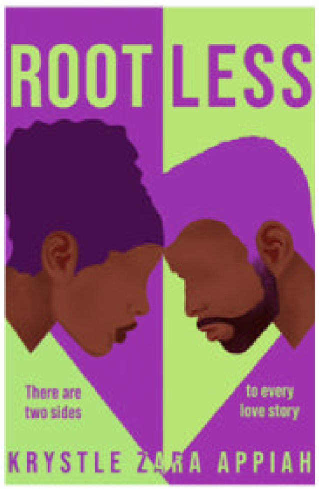
by Sarah Steele *(Headline, £9.99)*

From a brilliant storyteller whose stories are always enchanting and engrossing, this is a dual-timescale setting, which I love! In 1997, archivist Amy finds evidence that Agent Colette, an alleged spy, actually existed, and MI6 'godmother' Verity Cooper may be able to help. In the 1941 strand, we meet Sophie, aka 'Agent Colette'. Inspired by true events. **16 March**

THE INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER
JILL SANTOPOLO
Stars in an Italian Sky

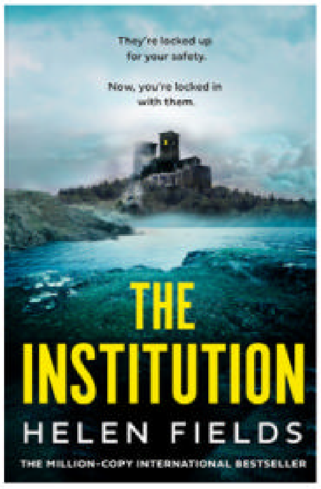
Stars In An Italian Sky

by Jill Santopolo *(Hodder & Stoughton, £20)* This is another dual-timescale story. In 1946 Italy, Giovanna and Vincenzo fall for each other, but differing backgrounds and families ruin what might have been. In 2017 New York, Cass and Luca are in love, but when their grandparents meet, family secrets spill open. **2 March**


ROOTLESS
There are two sides
to every love story
KRYSTLE ZARA APPIAH

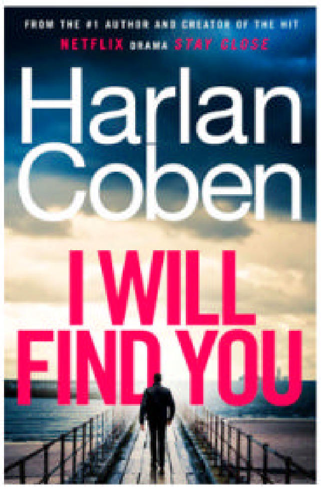
Rootless

by Krystle Zara Appiah *(The Borough Press, £16.99)* A debut novel that deserves to find many readers. Efe and Sam meet as teens. Years later, they marry, but have different ideas about being parents. Exploring belonging, culture and what it means to be a parent, this story of a British-Ghanaian marriage in crisis is a must-read. **16 March**


They're locked up for your safety.
Now, you're locked in with them.
THE INSTITUTION
HELEN FIELDS
THE MILLION-COPY INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER

The Institution

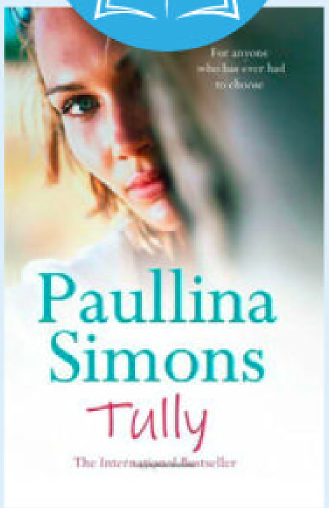
by Helen Fields *(Avon, £14.99)* What a read! I passed my copy on to friends and they read and enjoyed it, too. Forensic profiler Dr Connie Woolwine is sent to The Institution – the world's highest-security prison hospital, where inmates are destined to never leave – after a nurse is found dead. This has potential for a TV series. **2 March**


FROM THE #1 AUTHOR AND CREATOR OF THE HIT NETFLIX DRAMA STAY CLOSE
Harlan Coben
I WILL FIND YOU

I Will Find You

by Harlan Coben *(Century, £20)* This has such a superb opening that you'll lock yourself away so you aren't interrupted while reading! David is in prison for murdering his son, but he didn't do it. Five years into his sentence, a friend shows him a photo that can prove his innocence. The master of Netflix adaptations is on fine form. **16 March**

From my bookshelf


Paullina Simons
Tully
The International Bestseller

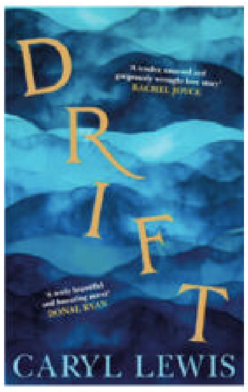
Tully

by Paullina Simons *(Harper)* I devoured so many books by this author after reading this debut of hers – I particularly loved *Red Leaves* and *Eleven Hours*. This one is about a young woman from the wrong side of the tracks and the power of friendships through adversity.

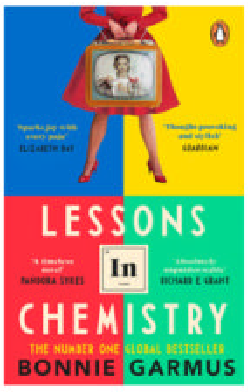
- ***This is Nina's choice, but if you'd like to feature your favourite book here, email prima@hearst.co.uk, marking your email From My Bookshelf.***

3 of the BEST BOOKS TO GIFT THIS MOTHER'S DAY

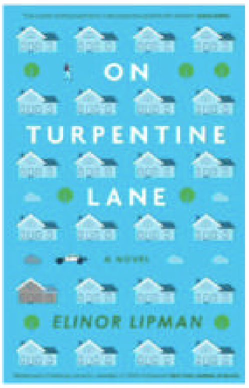
I asked three independent booksellers the one book they would recommend to give to mums...


DRIFT
CARYL LEWIS

Drift **by Caryl Lewis** is the author's first book in English after years of writing in her native Welsh. *Emma, owner of Book-ish in Crickhowell, Powys, says:* **'It's a beautiful, mystical tale of outcasts, love, folklore and resilience.'** *book-ish.co.uk*


LESSONS In CHEMISTRY
THE NUMBER ONE GLOBAL BESTSELLER
BONNIE GARMUS

Lessons In Chemistry **by Bonnie Garmus** is a bestseller and loved by many. *Alex, owner of Bert's Books in Swindon, Wiltshire, says:* **'Out now in paperback, this is the perfect book to gift.'** *bertsbooks.co.uk*


ON TURPENTINE LANE
A NOVEL
ELINOR LIPMAN

On Turpentine Lane **by Elinor Lipman.** *Hazel, owner of Village Books in Dulwich, London, says:* **'This is an intelligent, funny, feelgood novel from an author more people should read.'** *village-books.co.uk*

Portrait of Nina Liz McAulay **Hair and makeup** Jo McKenna

WIN £100

READER SHORT STORY

Spring flowers

As winter draws to a close, it's time for opportunity to bloom...

Harriett turned off the weather forecast with a sigh. That was the problem with spring: you could have weeks of nice weather and then a cold snap. In fact, the weather was one of many things Harriett didn't really like about the time of year. Others always seemed overjoyed by the end of winter, with the promise of spring weddings and Easter holidays, but Harriett didn't have any big plans.

She checked her bag for her keys, phone and gloves, ready for her drive to work. She'd been working at the garden centre for almost a year, since relocating to the village with her partner, James. Unfortunately, the move had been a disaster, and was another reason this time of year was difficult. James had admitted he was missing one particular woman from his previous office and had promptly moved back. Harriett, having nowhere else to go, had stayed, shocked and disappointed. Her previous job, working for a large but unfashionable stately home, was no longer available and she had taken a job at the local garden centre in desperation, hoping she might be able to persuade someone to put on a few events similar to the ones she had organised in her last role. So far, her ideas had been dismissed by the manager as too ambitious for Bishops Seaford.

Putting on her oversized waterproof garden centre coat, Harriett resigned herself to another day of routine watering, sorting and coaxing the rather uninspiring display of spring bulbs into something more exciting. She found the endless tubs of yellow daffodils, pink tulips and blue grape hyacinths hard to like, with their garish colours and forced jollity. She had been happier with the subtle shades of the hellebores, snowdrops and crocuses she'd nursed through the winter.

She remembered sadly the plans she and James had had for their garden this time last year. Big, blousy borders full of cottage garden plants smelling deliciously in the summer warmth, with Harriett enjoying a glass of wine sat under a pergola of roses. It seemed a lifetime away on this chilly morning with a long day at work ahead.

Harriett was halfway through watering the indoor plants when her walkie-talkie crackled into life.

'Delivery, Harriett. Can you come straight away?' came the curt instruction from David, the manager.

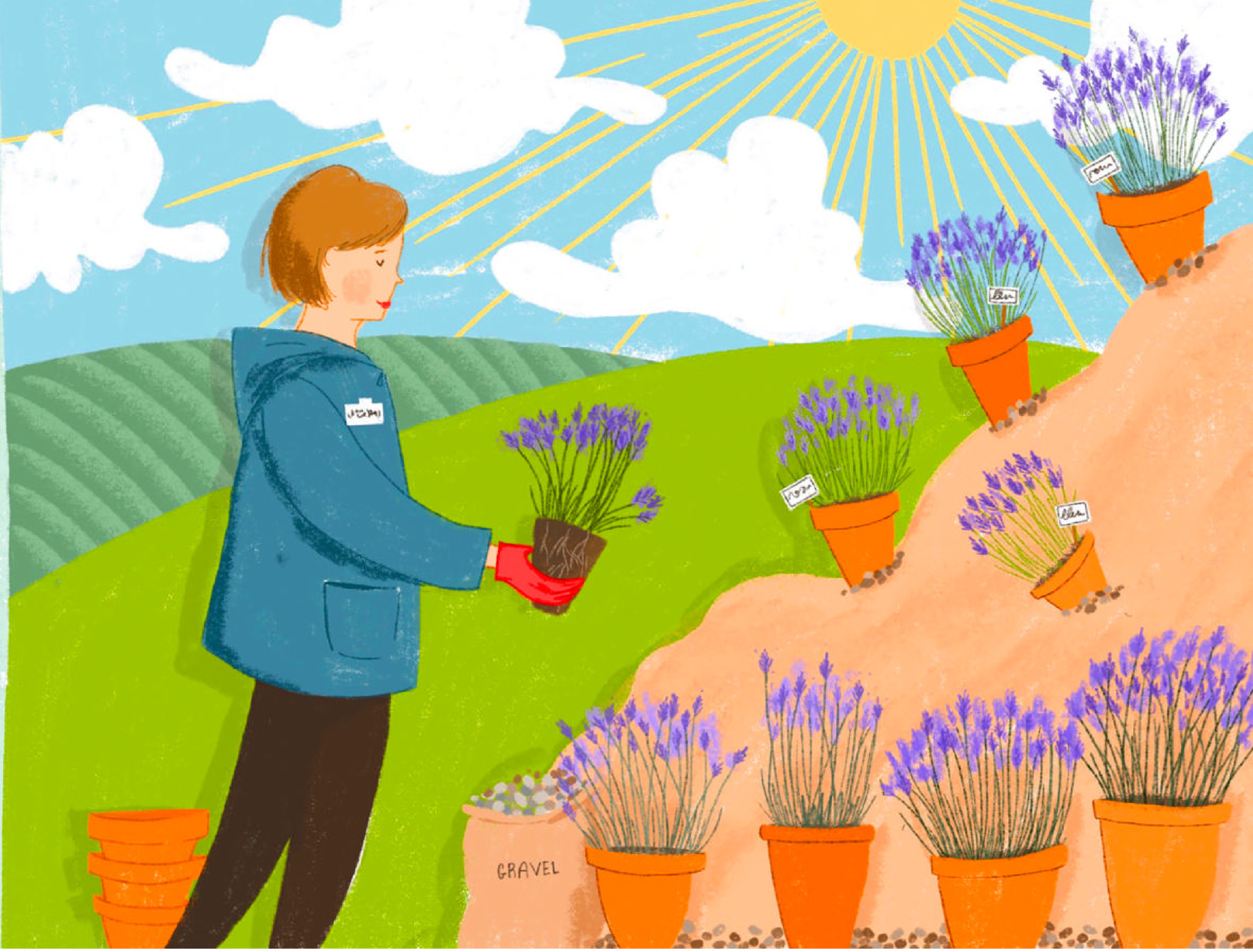
'Please,' thought Harriett tersely to herself. 'Yes, David, can do.'

Harriett walked through the rows of plants to the outside area at the back of the garden centre, where an intriguing van with French number plates was parked with its back doors wide open. David was talking to an interesting-looking man, dressed more causally than the usual plant reps.

'Right, Harriett,' said David, 'I'm taking Christophe here for a bit of lunch, as he's come a long way. I want you to give these plants a bit of *je ne sais quoi*.'

Christophe gave Harriett a smile and shrugged apologetically.

COMPETITION RULES: Prize is £100. Entry to the competition and acceptance of the prize constitutes permission to use the winner's name for promotional purposes and for publishing in *Prima* without additional consultation. Entries may be edited for publication. This competition is not open to employees of Hearst UK or their direct relatives. The most deserving entry, in *Prima*'s sole opinion, will be chosen as the winner. Only the winner will be contacted personally. The prize is as stated, although Hearst UK reserves the right to change the prize in the event of unforeseen circumstances. If it is in Hearst UK's opinion that no entries are deemed of a publishable



With a disarming French accent, he explained the delivery was from his lavender farm in the south of France. Apparently, David had done a deal when he holidayed in the area that summer. The smell from the van was captivating, as the plants' pale silver green leaves had been jostled on their journey.

David led Christophe away, leaving Harriett alone to unload the van. She found a trolley and transferred the beautiful shiny little bushes, which would be ready to bloom purple in a few weeks' time. Smiling at the little piece of French sunshine that had been delivered, she pushed the trolley out of the storage area and suddenly found inspiration. Looking around at the damaged stock and leftover bits, she knew exactly how to create a bit of '*je ne sais quoi*'.

Harriett was almost finished when the two men returned later that afternoon.

'Wow!' whispered Christophe.

Harriett had created a stunning upright display, using the broken terracotta pots from the storeroom planted with the lavender bushes and topped with gravel from torn bags. She had found an old display poster from last year's summer event to create a background of sun and blue sky behind the pots. Each plant had a handwritten label with the price and the name of the village in France where they were grown.

'You have a talent,' said Christophe. 'Maybe you could come over and help me some time...'

'In France?' asked Harriett, smiling.

'Yes, the château needs someone with a few ideas.'

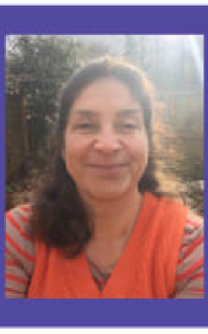
'The château?'

'Ah yes, the farm is part of the château's estate.'

'Well, as it happens,' said Harriett, 'my previous job was managing a stately home.'

Christophe looked both impressed and delighted, and Harriett's heart gave a little jolt of happiness. All of a sudden, spring really did seem like the start of something new.

Illustration Emma Block



DO YOU HAVE A WAY WITH WORDS? This month's winning author is Amy Eade, who wins £100! She says: 'I don't like spring, but I put the work in as I love summer gardens. I also love France!' For your chance to win, email your entry of 800 words maximum to: yourwinningstory@hearst.co.uk or post to Your Winning Story, *Prima* Features, House of Hearst, 30 Panton Street, London SW1Y 4AJ, including your name, address, phone number and a good-quality photograph. Please note that, unfortunately, *Prima* cannot return any photographs or stories.

standard, Hearst UK reserves the right not to award any prize. Hearst UK does not accept any responsibility for lost entries. Proof of sending is not proof of receipt. Hearst UK's decision is final in every situation, including any not covered above, and no correspondence will be entered into. Entrants will be deemed to have accepted these rules and agreed to be bound by them. Hearst UK shall be permitted to exclude any entrant at any time at its sole discretion. By entering the competition, you agree that the copyright and all other rights in respect of the entry shall be assigned to Hearst UK.

prima Puzzles

FIVE pages of fun – with cash prizes to win!

CROSSWORD

Solve the crossword by working out the answers to the clues. When completed correctly, the shaded squares, reading top to bottom, left to right, will spell out your prize answer.

WIN £50

ACROSS

1 Difficult to understand or do (11)
9 Cloud (anag) (5)
10 *Much ___ About Nothing*: Shakespeare play (3)
11 Additional (5)
12 Increase in size (5)
13 Abroad (8)
16 Subjects such as biology and chemistry (8)
18 Type of expression (5)
21 ___ Sharapova: ex-tennis star (5)
22 ___ Longoria: actor in *Desperate Housewives* (3)
23 Find the solution (5)
24 Explanation of an event (11)

DOWN

2 Left out (7)
3 Pablo ___ : Spanish painter (7)
4 Large tropical lizard (6)
5 South American mountain range (5)
6 Rub out (5)
7 Capital of Argentina (6,5)
8 A boot with wheels on (6,5)
14 Piece (7)
15 Star sign (7)
17 Hot-tasting food (6)
19 Visual representation (5)
20 Pleasant sound; song (5)

■	1 ▨	2 ▨		3		4	▨	5		6		■
7	■		■		■		■		■		■	8
	■		■	9	▨				■	10		
11					■		■		■		■	
▨	■		■		■		■	12				
13								■	■	■	■	
	■		■		■	■	■	14	■	15	■	
	■	■	■	■	16	17						
18		19		20	■		■		■		■	
	■		■	▨	■		■	21				
22			■	23					■		■	▨
	■		■		■		■		■		■	
■	24											■

21 ACROSS

5 DOWN

7 DOWN

Enter online at prima.co.uk/primapuzzles

Solve the crossword in the usual way. When completed correctly, the shaded squares, reading top to bottom, left to right, will spell out your prize answer (edible fruit of a palm tree, 7). You can **enter for FREE online** to be in with a chance to **win the £50 prize**. It couldn't be easier: simply go to prima.co.uk/primapuzzles. Alternatively, you can call our hotline.
See page 150 for the phone numbers and all the HOW TO ENTER details.

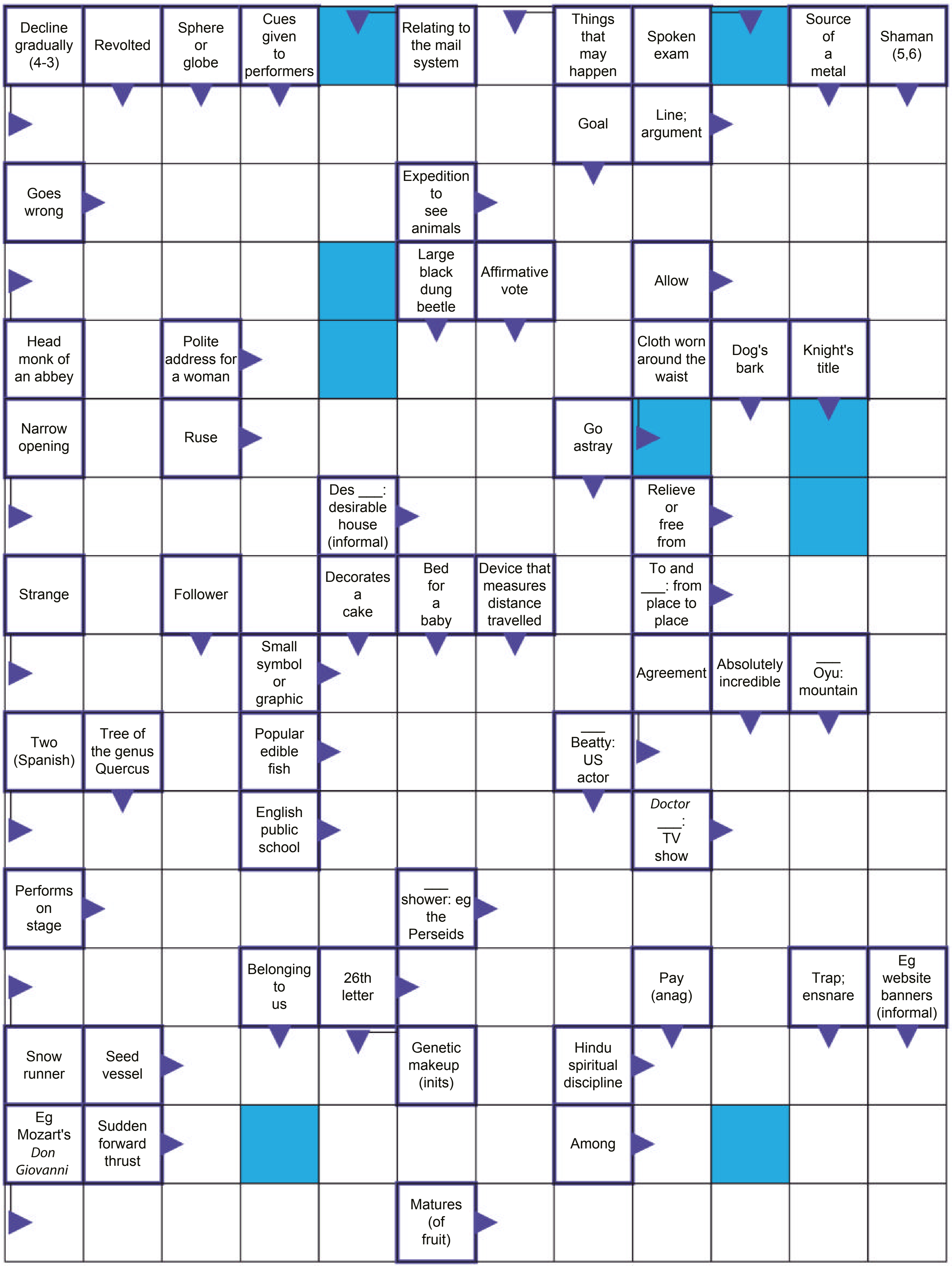
Enter online at prima.co.uk/primapuzzles

ARROW-WORD

Put your feet up and win £50 at the same time!

WIN £50

Fill in the grid according to the arrows. When done, the shaded squares will reveal the answer to the following question: **What is the name of the chemical element with symbol K?**



Decline gradually (4-3)	Revolted	Sphere or globe	Cues given to performers	▨	Relating to the mail system		Things that may happen	Spoken exam	▨	Source of a metal	Shaman (5,6)
							Goal	Line; argument			
Goes wrong					Expedition to see animals						
				▨	Large black dung beetle	Affirmative vote		Allow			
Head monk of an abbey		Polite address for a woman		▨				Cloth worn around the waist	Dog's bark	Knight's title	
Narrow opening		Ruse					Go astray	▨		▨	
				Des ___: desirable house (informal)				Relieve or free from		▨	
Strange		Follower		Decorates a cake	Bed for a baby	Device that measures distance travelled		To and ___: from place to place			
			Small symbol or graphic					Agreement	Absolutely incredible	___ Oyu: mountain	
Two (Spanish)	Tree of the genus Quercus		Popular edible fish				___ Beatty: US actor				
			English public school					*Doctor* ___: TV show			
Performs on stage					___ shower: eg the Perseids						
			Belonging to us	26th letter				Pay (anag)		Trap; ensnare	Eg website banners (informal)
Snow runner	Seed vessel				Genetic makeup (inits)		Hindu spiritual discipline				
Eg Mozart's *Don Giovanni*	Sudden forward thrust		▨				Among		▨		
					Matures (of fruit)						

Enter online at prima.co.uk/primapuzzles

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Just for FUN

WORD SEARCH

Look for the words below, which are all related to **spring**, in the grid. All are hidden except one – can you find it?

S	J	F	O	R	G	E	T	M	E	N	O	T	Y	H	T	C	P
R	N	R	P	V	T	H	A	W	C	I	N	C	I	P	U	E	S
P	U	D	D	L	E	S	P	I	T	Y	I	R	Y	R	O	N	S
K	F	T	O	A	T	S	T	S	U	D	A	F	F	O	D	I	L
H	Q	E	B	V	H	G	V	O	T	S	N	L	S	T	R	H	W
S	R	A	I	R	Z	G	O	H	H	E	M	H	G	W	A	S	O
H	A	S	Q	S	G	E	T	O	S	O	O	N	U	J	I	N	A
M	J	T	U	T	E	E	O	T	S	W	I	B	N	T	N	U	O
A	A	E	S	M	D	T	S	S	E	N	G	P	A	B	B	S	P
Z	T	R	U	T	S	A	O	R	A	L	A	S	P	Q	O	T	R
H	L	A	C	M	Z	L	S	E	P	T	R	D	R	N	W	G	I
T	S	L	O	H	B	O	L	F	P	S	D	U	I	K	O	E	M
W	P	U	R	I	Q	C	C	O	T	S	E	B	L	N	L	E	R
O	I	S	C	T	G	O	P	G	F	D	N	A	L	P	R	D	O
R	L	G	U	N	R	H	K	O	A	L	I	R	S	I	S	E	S
G	U	Y	I	E	H	C	L	N	U	I	N	L	B	O	L	M	E
L	T	R	J	S	D	I	D	O	Z	Y	G	C	Z	R	N	A	Z
O	P	R	U	H	A	E	O	C	C	J	I	R	R	T	T	V	C
S	T	I	E	G	L	E	R	C	Q	R	C	O	L	O	U	R	S
G	E	R	E	I	U	S	E	I	L	F	R	E	T	T	U	B	R
M	V	R	O	U	Y	S	L	F	I	E	Y	A	M	U	R	S	F
C	M	N	H	T	N	I	C	A	Y	H	Q	R	I	C	V	T	S
T	P	T	P	I	R	O	T	K	S	N	O	L	D	R	O	W	J
I	I	E	R	E	J	Z	V	P	I	Z	Y	J	P	R	O	V	I

APRIL
BLOSSOM
BUDS
BUTTERFLIES
CHOCOLATE EGGS
COLOURS
CROCUS
DAFFODIL
DANDELION
EASTER
FOLIAGE
FORGET-ME-NOT
GARDENING
GROWTH
HYACINTH
LILAC
MARCH
MAY
NESTS
PICNIC
PRIMROSE
PUDDLES
RAINBOW
SEASON
SHOOTS
SHOWERS
SNOWDROP
SPRING CLEANING
SUNSHINE
THAW
TULIPS

LAST MONTH'S JUST FOR FUN SOLUTIONS

SUDOKU

EASY PEASY

9	4	7	3	8	1	6	2	5
3	1	5	6	7	2	4	8	9
2	8	6	9	4	5	7	3	1
4	6	1	2	9	3	8	5	7
8	2	3	7	5	4	9	1	6
7	5	9	1	6	8	2	4	3
6	3	2	4	1	7	5	9	8
1	7	8	5	2	9	3	6	4
5	9	4	8	3	6	1	7	2

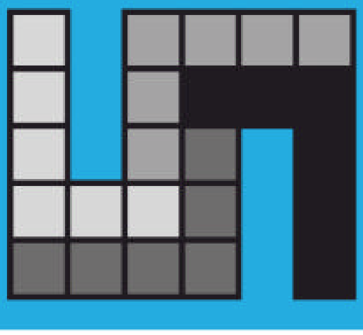
TOUGH STUFF

7	1	3	8	5	6	2	9	4
6	4	5	7	2	9	1	3	8
2	9	8	1	3	4	6	7	5
4	8	9	6	1	5	3	2	7
1	3	2	9	8	7	5	4	6
5	6	7	3	4	2	9	8	1
3	7	6	4	9	1	8	5	2
8	5	4	2	6	3	7	1	9
9	2	1	5	7	8	4	6	3

WORD SEARCH
HOTEL CALIFORNIA

WORD WHEEL
ABANDONED

SHAPE SPLIT



DECEMBER 2022 PRIZE SOLUTIONS

CROSSWORD
Airport

ARROW-WORD
Girls Aloud

CODEWORD
Chocolate

✻ Solutions to this month's prize-winning puzzles will be in the August 2023 issue.

Enter online at prima.co.uk/primapuzzles

Just for FUN

NUMBER TOWER

The number in each empty block is the sum of the numbers in the two squares directly beneath it – can you fill them all in and complete the tower?

968						
	245					
			110			
54	69	63	50			
21					37	
8					12	25

	+		x		54
+	■	x	■	+	
5	-	3	-		-7
x	■	-	■	x	
	÷		+		9
24		22		105	

Just for FUN

NUMBER SQUARE

Enter the numbers from 1 to 9 once each into the puzzle grid in order to complete the maths sums correctly. Perform sums from left to right and top to bottom, rather than in strict mathematical order.

Just for FUN

SUDOKU

Place the numbers from 1 to 9 in each empty cell so that each row, column and 3x3 block contains all the numbers from 1 to 9.

	7	4		5		8	9	
2	5		8	4	7		1	3
1			6		2			5
5	6	7				3	8	4
		1				9		
9	8	3				2	5	1
3			7		9			8
8	9		3	6	4		2	7
	1	6		8		4	3	

VERY EASY

4						8		
	5	9		4			6	3
8				7	6		5	
1				2	7		8	
	9	8		5		3	7	
	7		8	6				4
	4		1	8				5
3	1			9		7	4	
		6						1

EASY

Enter online at prima.co.uk/primapuzzles

CODEWORD

WIN £50

For £50, see if Meryl Streep can help you work out the number code for each letter of the alphabet. We've placed the M, now you do the same with the Es and Rs, and also the Ys and Ls, and on you go. When you're done, use your key grid to find out the prize word. **Enter for FREE online** at prima.co.uk/primapuzzles to be in with a chance to **win the £50 prize**. Alternatively, you can call our hotline. For all the details on HOW TO ENTER, see below.

A
B
C
D
E
F
G
H
I
J
K
L
~~M~~
N
O
P
Q
R
S
T
U
V
W
X
Y
Z

25	18	8	15	11	8	15	2	16	7	5	5	4
18	■	■	■	9	■	■	■	18	■	■	10	■
8	■	■	8	11	3	6	11	8	1 M	■	21	■
21	2	14	11	3	2	■	6	24	11	12	2	5
2	■	■	13	■	11	■	3	■	26	■	■	11
5	■	6	10	1 M	12	5	2	15	2	8	■	20
18	■	10	■	10	■	11	■	2	■	5	18	25
2	17	7	18	20	10	23	2	8	■	2	■	2
22	■	3	■	10				15	14	2	2	25
2	23	11	5	15				11	■	22	■	■
■	■	13	■	24				1 M	2	2	15	8
21	3	2	22	2				2	■	5	■	15
4	■	10	■	18	20	8	18	20	6	2	3	2
13	20	7	■	8	■	26	■	15	■	8	■	11
10	■	8	4	1 M	21	18	10	8	18	8	■	25
20	■	■	10	■	2	■	13	■	21	■	■	18
2	16	16	7	8	2	■	3	11	18	8	18	20
■	5	■	3	11	8	24	2	3	8	■	■	2
■	2	■	■	13	■	■	■	2	■	■	■	8
2	23	15	3	11	22	11	13	11	20	19	11	8

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
M	E	R	Y	L								

14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26

YOUR KEY GRID

15	11	1	21	10	7	3	18	20	2

Enter online at prima.co.uk/primapuzzles

HOW TO ENTER ONLINE Save money by entering online at **prima.co.uk/primapuzzles**. Once you have registered, please select the April issue cover, then submit the answer(s) of the puzzle(s) you want to enter. **PHONE** 0906 470 1001* for the Crossword, 0906 470 1003* for the Arrow-word, 0906 470 1002* for the Codeword, leaving your name and address. *All calls cost 65p per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge, and should last no longer than two minutes. You must be 18 or over and have the bill payer's permission. **The closing date for phone entries is midnight 26 April 2023. Only one entry per person. If you call to enter after the closing date, you will not be entered but you will be charged.** Entries will be drawn at random. The competition is open to UK residents only and usual rules apply (see above right). Service provider: Spoke, 0333 202 3390.

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Photography Getty

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A theatre break in London's West End

WATCH MICHAEL BALL AT HIS BEST!

ASPECTS OF LOVE

Michael Ball is returning to Andrew Lloyd Webber's celebrated musical *Aspects Of Love* at the Lyric Theatre. This story of passion, love, life and loss in post-war France and Italy follows three generations of the Dillingham family, spanning 17 years. One reader will win a pair of tickets to the show, plus an overnight stay with dinner and breakfast at The Clermont, Charing Cross (theclermont.co.uk). *Aspects Of Love* (aspectsoflove.com) will be at the Lyric Theatre from 12 May. **Enter for free online at prima.co.uk/treatsapr23. Call 0905 789 1001 (80p per min plus your network access charge)*. Text PRIMAPRIZE1 to 88833 (£1.50 plus your network charge)**. Leave your name and address when entering.**

See Michael Ball in the West End, then stay at The Clermont

TERMS & CONDITIONS Prize is subject to availability and excludes 25 May 2023. No cash alternative. Any additional expenses incurred are the responsibility of the winner. Please note, Michael Ball will not perform on a Monday from 29 May onwards. Prize is valid until 7 July 2023.

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With powerful botanicals, aromatherapeutic blends and skin-soothing ingredients for the mind, body and soul, Soak Sunday is a luxurious bath and body care collection and we have a bundle, worth £500, up for grabs! Available at soaksunday.com and Beauty Bay. **Enter for free online at prima.co.uk/treatsapr23. Call 0905 789 1002 (80p per min plus your network access charge)*. Text PRIMAPRIZE2 to 88833 (£1.50 plus your network charge)**. Leave your name and address when entering.**

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Over to YOU!

Email us at **prima@hearst.co.uk** with your letters – plus photos of your crafts, pets or anything that makes you smile

How to REPOT your LIFE

I was very interested in the *Are You Ready For Your Third Act?* feature (February). Frances Edmonds' (*How To Repot Your Life*) and other women's stories were so inspirational, and showed whatever age you are, you can have new hobbies, new experiences and new ambitions. Sixty is just the start! **Naheed Kausar**

£50 star letter

Made with love

I'd like to give a big shout out to my brother Martin. He makes delicious chutneys, jams and juices using produce from his garden. He never wastes anything, and nobody makes crab-apple jelly like him. In fact, I'm planning to make a book of his recipes. **Caroline Fakhri**

Email us at prima@hearst.co.uk to share what's important to you.

The crafts Susan made from our February issue

Reunited through Prima

I was given February's *Prima* and was delighted to see a story about my friend Tracey Barr. We played hockey together 25 years ago, but had lost touch. I was inspired to contact her and we've been chatting ever since. To thank the friend who gave me *Prima*, I made her some crafts from the issue. **Susan Duerdan**

Your poems

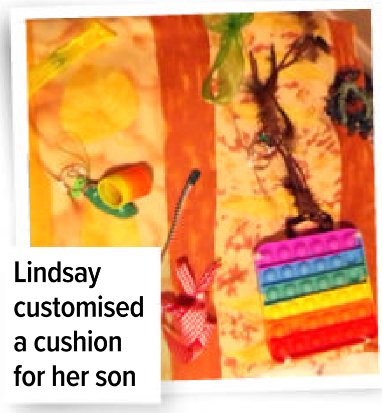
Gratitude

G*reen gardens in bloom*
R*ebel against the winter*
A*nd remind me of summer,*
T*hose days of balmy blue.*
I *am grateful for the seasons*
T*hat remind me of the cycle of life.*
U*nderneath the soil, the seed waits to grow.*
D*on't let me lose my gratitude, that I may*
E*ver be in awe of the beauty of this world.*

Suzanne Henderson

Sensory sensation

I wanted to buy my autistic son a sensory cushion to help stimulate him, however the ones online were extremely expensive, so I took a cushion I already had and sewed on some textured items, such as ribbons, feathers and fidget toys. My son (and our cat!) are extremely happy with the results. **Lindsay Bennett**


Lindsay customised a cushion for her son

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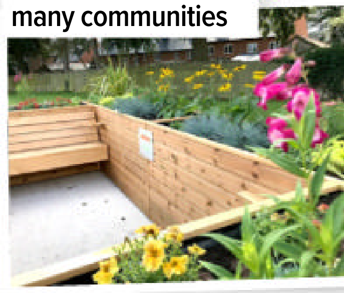
GOOD TO MEET YOU

Lyndsey Young, 54, from Bottesford, Leics, is working to end loneliness, one bench at a time.


Lyndsey has helped many communities

I came up with the idea for Friendly Benches, where people can come together, when I was feeling lonely. With local support, we opened our first in 2018. Now there are 14 benches, which seat 12, across England, which act as social hubs, mini community gardens and safe social spaces for anyone feeling isolated, lonely or at a loose end. Every month, there's a free event for people to get to know their neighbours. *thefriendlybench.co.uk*

Counting blessings

During Covid, my daughter and granddaughter noted any nice things they'd seen or heard each day in their diaries. At the end of the week, they reread these and relived the moments. I'm doing the same; however small, I'll write down one nice moment a day. **Lillian Ross-Mackenzie**

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Compiled by Bryony Gooch
Photography The Friendly Bench CIC

ANNE UNWIN, 61
Gran to four.
‘My mum is kind, caring, hilarious and beautiful,’ says her daughter Philippa.

GAIL QUINN, 63
Gran to two.
‘I’m happily retired, dancing again and have an allotment.’

WENDY PLUMB, 58
Gran to two.
‘My mum is always on the go, she loves walking the dog, gardening and hula hooping,’ says her daughter Jenna.

Glam GRANS!

When super-glam gran Kym Marsh recently appeared in *Prima*, we asked for pictures of our own *Prima* glam grans – and you didn’t disappoint!

KAY BOYCE, 63
Gran to two. ‘I try to keep fit through Clubbercise or kettlebells.’

LINDA ENTECOTT, 59
Gran to three born last year with another due in July.
‘I’ve waited so long and, like buses, they all come at once.’

LYNDA SHARMAN, 70
Gran to three.
‘I’ve recently lost more than four stone, so I’m definitely feeling good.’

Next month
Don’t worry if your photo isn’t here. We had so many that we’re going to picture the rest in May’s issue.

ELSIE HATHAWAY, 96
Gran to five, a great-grandma and great-great-grandma. 'We all think Elsie is very glam for 96,' says daughter Jane.

LEFT-RIGHT: COLETTE KINSMAN, 62, LINDA McLOUGHLIN, 65, VAL LIPTROT, 65
Together they are grans to 11! 'Being around children keeps you young,' says Colette.

ANN HUGHES, 69
Gran to one. 'I love to keep fit with Pilates, yoga and walking.'

CHRISTINE SIMPSON, 70
Gran to six. 'This is five generations of my family and three of us are grandmothers!' says Christine. (Left to right) 'My mother, myself, my daughter and my granddaughter holding her son.'

MEG STEVENSON, 78
Gran to three with a great-grandchild on the way. 'I've never coloured my hair and always try to dress modern.'

AMANDA MURRAY, 57
Gran to four. 'I love taking my grandchildren for a picnic.'

DIANE CLARK, 71
Gran to four. 'This is me at my daughter's wedding.'

SHERRIL BUCKLES, 59
Gran to one. 'I'm known as Nani as my mum, who is 84 and great-grandmother, took the grandmum title.'

Compiled by Bryony Gooch **Kym Marsh Photography** Nicky Johnston

Your Stars

FOR APRIL

with Yasmin Boland

THE MOON & YOU
April's New Moon eclipse brings new beginnings; make moves based on feelings rather than facts. The Libra Full Moon arrives on 6 April at 5.34am; consider where you're lacking balance. The Aries Solar Eclipse on 20 April will bring new developments.

STAR OF THE MONTH

ARIES 21 March to 20 April

Behold! This month brings a New Moon eclipse in your sign, which is the heavens' way of telling you there's a new start coming your way. It may not be easy and you will probably need to close one door to open another, but it's exciting! Life is about to feel as though it's on fast forward.

TAURUS 21 April to 21 May

It's a big month for everyone, thanks to the New Moon eclipse, but you're getting a double whammy. Mercury is also about to retrograde – this time, in your sign! Prepare to rethink, revisit and review. Second chances abound; where would you like to make a change in your life? Set the intention and make it happen.

GEMINI 22 May to 22 June

It's hard to know what's most important to tell you. The New Moon eclipse this month means you can make a wish that comes true. Decide what you want to manifest and make your wish on 20 April. Plus, your ruler Mercury starts a retrograde cycle, so you need to go over things in detail, rather than forging ahead.

CANCER 23 June to 23 July

Hopefully the past few months have seen your professional life soaring, or you've been recognised for your achievements elsewhere in your life. This month, all that can go up another notch – the trick is to aim high and believe in yourself. In other news, an old friend is back on the scene.

LEO 24 July to 23 August

There's a New Moon eclipse this month and it's taking place in your Career Zone. So, what are your ambitions? What have you yet to achieve? If you don't work – and actually, even if you do – what's on your bucket list? Now is the time to start ticking things off it! The eclipse will be the wind beneath your wings.

VIRGO 24 August to 23 September

If you're feeling stuck with no chance of escape, the New Moon eclipse in your Travel Zone this month really could change all that. If you want to get away (or if you want to return to studying), now is the time to declare your intentions to the Universe, and then take the inspired action needed to make it real.

LIBRA 24 September to 23 October

As you might know, you're in a positive cycle now, thanks to Jupiter being in your opposite sign. Hopefully this month sees things going from good to even better for you, as the eclipse fires up the part of your chart associated with being honest about money in your relationship. You love to love, so open your heart. Now is also the time to spoil yourself.

SCORPIO

24 October to 22 November

There's a New Moon in your Love Zone this month, but it's not just any New Moon – it's a New Moon eclipse! In other words, if you want to spice up your romantic life, now is the time. Even the most established of couples could feel like there's been something new added to their relationship.

SAGITTARIUS

23 November to 21 December

You're never too old to change your life (and by the way, no one is calling you old!). Just be aware of this now, as the April eclipse fires up the part of your chart to do with your daily life. Which routines are working for you and what else can you do to make your life feel more functional? Do that.

CAPRICORN

22 December to 20 January

When you signed up to be a Capricorn this lifetime, you took on a lot of karma! Being a Capricorn has been very intense for the past decade or two, as you might have noticed. All that is easing up now, though, and this month's eclipse is reminding you that laughter and having fun is the best medicine… for everything!

AQUARIUS

21 January to 19 February

As you go through some massive life changes this year, remember to breathe and refocus. This month, we have the New Moon eclipse triggering your Home Zone, so expect seismic shifts when it comes to home, family and your personal life. Now is the time to detox anything in your private life that you know needs it. Be truthful with yourself.

PISCES 20 February to 20 March

While you learn to contend with having Saturn in your sign all this year and beyond, there is one thing you really need to work on – a positive mental attitude. The more you can focus on what you want (rather than on what you don't want), the better your life is going to be! It's crucial you understand this as soon as possible.

- *For your extended month forecast, visit yasminboland.com*

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TREAT YOURSELF

This month's essentials

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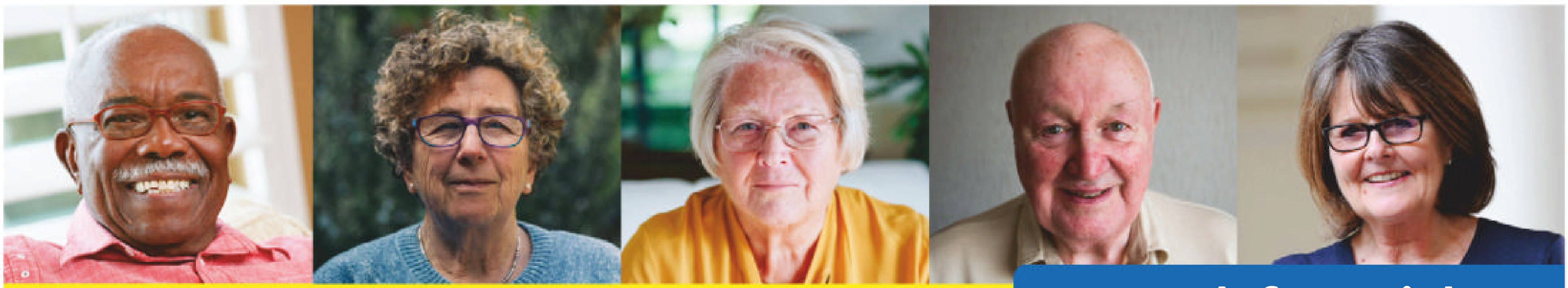

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No need to feel tired all the time with **Magnesium+**

Magnesium is an essential mineral for all aspects of health, from muscles to bones, heart health, immunity, mood and even just a good night's sleep – and it's vital for fighting tiredness and fatigue.

'I feel **rejuvenated.**'

Amazingly, more than half of us in the UK aren't getting our daily recommended magnesium intake from our diets. More and more Brits are now discovering the link between a lack of magnesium and persistent low energy, and finding that a supplement can help, like 67-year old Ingrid Ord, a psychotherapist based in Warwick.

'We moved into our house in December and there was so much I wanted to do. And I realised that I was utterly exhausted. I found I was doing nothing, just the absolute basics. And I was desperate.'

Then Ingrid read about a supplement called Magnesium+* developed by FutureYou Cambridge, a leading food supplement company known for making formulations backed by extensive scientific research.

'I looked at the research and I liked the science behind the supplement. I thought, right, I like this – let's try it. I'll do it for three months, and see if there's any improvement.

Now I find that, after a bit of a rest, I feel more physical energy so I can do a few things around the house. I feel rejuvenated.

I can walk more, which is very important for me – I've got two beautiful rescue dogs, and love to have fun with them walking in the fields.'

'We've got a beautiful place here to walk – a small hill, for most people – but for me it's quite a challenge. And I can get up to the top now and look at the incredible view.'

Unlike supplements that use magnesium oxide, Magnesium+ uses a naturally-occurring mineral called magnesium lactate, which is adept at optimising and maintaining levels of magnesium in the body.

'Magnesium oxide may contain a high amount of magnesium but it's not easily released into the body,' explains Dr Miriam Ferrer PhD, head of product development at FutureYou Cambridge.

'Taking more magnesium to try and make up for the problem isn't the best approach, as too much can cause an upset stomach and other unpleasant gastrointestinal side effects.'

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FutureYou Cambridge, a nutraceutical company known for its well-researched nutritional supplements, is giving away packs of its flagship energy product to new customers.

It comes after the Cambridge firm received a flurry of positive reviews for its best-selling energy product on Trustpilot, the independent online review platform.

"Within two weeks I was a different woman, with energy to spare"

'I am a woman of 74, and a few months ago I realised that I had no energy at all. I put it down to my age, but it was really impacting on my life in so many ways. My husband read an ad for Magnesium+ and I thought I would give it a try. Within two weeks I was a different woman, with energy to spare,' says Anne.

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April fool? You bet!

TV and radio presenter **Gaby Roslin** explains why she loves a prank and chocolate isn't everything

Panorama fooled the nation with its footage of 'spaghetti trees'

It's my best friend's birthday on 1 April (she's no fool). I was trying to decide what to get her and I thought about some amazing goodies from medical herbalist and nutritional therapist Collette Casey's new website (themedicinalherbalist.com). There are teas, tinctures and natural skincare formulated for women and targeting things such as PMS, perimenopause and menopause. I had one of her teas when I had an infection, and it was incredible.

Now I must work out which products to buy my BFF and not keep for myself! Do you do that? I choose things for people that I'd want myself and then get into a tizzy, wanting to keep them. In fact, I'm currently wearing a jumper that I bought my elder daughter for Christmas, which has somehow found its 'own' way into my wardrobe… How did that happen, I wonder? When I was younger, I used to borrow my dad's (posh) white shirts to wear open over a T-shirt, and they would miraculously end up in my cupboards. He wasn't thrilled but, in a funny way, I think he quite liked that I borrowed them. Weirdly, I still like that look to this day, wearing a big shirt with some wide-leg trousers.

> 'I buy gifts I really want for myself!'

Back now to April Fools. There have been some great pranks to try to fool the nation, from a 'treadmill' that supposedly mowed the lawn to a supermarket bringing out 'whistling carrots'. Probably the most famous was in 1957, when *Panorama* reported that Swiss farmers were thrilled with their bumper spaghetti crop from their 'spaghetti trees'.

I know some people don't like pranks, but I'm afraid I must come clean and say I do. As a child, I'd wake up early to put tomato ketchup on my face or arm or foot, then wake my parents up with a scream and ask them to look at what had happened. Each year, they would play along, and then I would shout, 'April Fool!' and they'd always look surprised.

So, whatever you're planning, keep it simple, don't hurt anyone and remember to let the person know it's just ketchup, after all! Happy April, everyone – have a good 'un.

GET IN TOUCH! If you'd like to share your thoughts or messages with Gaby, email gaby.roslin@hearst.co.uk

MY DELICIOUS PEA & ASPARAGUS RISOTTO

With the countdown to Easter, the chocolate fest has begun (yes, I know Easter isn't just about eggs and chocolates!). But as someone who doesn't like chocolate at all, I thought I'd share one of my family's favourite Easter recipes.

SERVES 4 • **50g butter** • **1-2 onions**, chopped • **350g risotto rice** • **Just under 2 litres vegetable stock** • **Large handful grated Parmesan** • **300g fresh or cooked peas** • **Large handful fresh asparagus**, chopped • **Large handful pea shoots or chives**, to garnish

1 Melt the butter in a pan but don't let it burn (I like to add olive oil, too) and sweat the onions for about 10min.

2 Stir in the rice and add the stock, one ladleful at a time, stirring continuously until the rice is creamy and tender.

3 Stir in the Parmesan, peas and asparagus, and keep stirring for a few min (we like our veg crunchy).

4 Top with the pea shoots or chives and serve with a side salad with my super-zingy dressing (below).

FOR THE DRESSING I've just discovered Biona Organic Apple Cider Vinegar Turmeric & Ginger (biona.co.uk), which is super tasty and good for you. Add a slug of it to some extra virgin olive oil and stir in 1tsp Dijon mustard, a squeeze of lemon and a drizzle of honey. Delicious!

Photography BBC, Holly Wren, Jason Ingram **Gaby wears** Suit, Fenwick. T-shirt, Sub Couture. Ring, Yaa Yaa London

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